THE ROMANCE OF PRIMITIVE METHODISM

JOSEPH RITSON

The Hugh Rae LIBRARY
nazarene theological college · manchester
WITHDRAWN

MANCHESTER WESLEY RESEARCH CENTRE

The Gift of Dr. E.C.A Huckett to the Machester Wesley Research Centre

– 2014 –

Primitive Methodist

Sunday School,

GRANTHAM.

First Prize.

AWARDED TO

Gladys Parker

W. SANDERS,

Superintendent.

1910.

R612r
(MWRC)

THE 12TH HARTLEY LECTURE.

WITHDRAWN

The Romance of Primitive Methodism.

BY

JOSEPH RITSON.

FIFTH EDITION

NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
LIBRARY

LONDON
EDWIN DALTON
PRIMITIVE METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE
48-50 ALDERSGATE STREET, E.C.
1910.

PREFACE.

THE Centenary of Primitive Methodism naturally suggested that the story of this Church should once more be told, not from the historical point of view so much as from that of romance. The most prosaic reader of the history must be impressed with its romantic elements, and these have been brought into special prominence by the various Centenary celebrations all over the country. For the facts embodied in this volume I have freely availed myself of what has been written, not only by those who have taken in hand to set forth in order the history of the Church whose origin is inseparably associated with Mow Cop, but by the large number of writers who have happily been led during these Centenary years to gather up the facts respecting a given Circuit or District. Many of these local Souvenirs are of deep interest and of considerable historical value.

But my first and warmest thanks are due to the Rev. H. B. Kendall, B.A., whose "Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church" must ever remain the standard work on the subject. Again and again I have been impressed with the ability, the research, and fine historical instinct of the writer. Then for some of the facts in one or two chapters I am indebted to the Rev. Henry Woodcock's "Romance and Reality," a mine of interesting material respecting the early days of Primitive Methodism.

Necessarily, the limitations of space precluded anything approaching an exhaustive history of Primitive Methodism, even from the single point of view here chosen; but for those who may not have access to Mr. Kendall's monumental work, or who desire a briefer presentation of the main facts, the present volume may be found helpful. Selection has been the great difficulty, and it would have been easier to write a much larger book. The writer counts it an honour to have been privileged to tell again, from so fascinating a standpoint, the story of the Church in which he was cradled, converted, and educated, and to which his ministry of thirty-five years has been devoted.

If the volume should serve to awaken in the minds of the rising generation of Primitive Methodists a deeper sense of personal obligation to the heroic men and saintly women who freely gave their lives to the work of founding and upbuilding this Church, its main purpose will have been served: for this all too inadequate tribute to the makers of Primitive Methodism has been penned in the hope that it may kindle in the hearts of their descendants a deeper loyalty and a more passionate enthusiasm, so that the closing celebrations of the Centenary may be worthy of a splendid past, and lead on to a grander future.

THE AUTHOR.

The Editorial Office,
45 Ferme Park Road,
London, N.

CONTENTS.

Chapter		Page
I.	Of Its Genesis	3
II.	Of the Making of Its Moses	19
III.	Of the Moulding of Its Mighty Evangelist	33
IV.	Of Its Camp Meetings	55
V.	Of Its Exodus	75
VI.	Of Its Pioneers	99
VII.	Of Its Women Preachers	133
VIII.	Of Its Persecutions	161
IX.	Of Its Local Preachers	175
X.	Of Its Pursuit of Learning	191
XI.	Of Its Circuit Life	205
XII.	Of Its Chapels	219
XIII.	Of Its Orators	233
XIV.	Of Its Distinguished Families	245
XV.	Of Its Early Hymns and Tunes	263
XVI.	Of Its National Service	275
XVII.	Of Its Modern Progress	289
	Index	308

TO

THE MEMORY OF

MY FRIEND

ROBERT HIND.

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Romance of the Wonderful	3
The Romance of Vision	4
The Romance of Beginnings	6
The England of a Century Ago	6
The Condition of Religious Life a Century Ago	7
The Moral Condition of the People	8
The Change wrought by Primitive Methodism	9
The Place of Mow Cop in Primitive Methodism	10
The Movement in which Mow Cop originated	11
Hugh Bourne's Place in the Movement	12
The Early Environment of Hugh Bourne	12
Hugh Bourne's Birth and Parentage	13
The Early Religious Impressions of Hugh Bourne	14
Bourne Influenced by the Works of Wesley and Fletcher	15
Hugh Bourne's Conversion	15
Hugh Bourne's Indebtedness to the Quakers	16
How Hugh Bourne Joined the Church	17

The Romance of Primitive Methodism.

—o—

CHAPTER I.

OF ITS GENESIS.

IT is not with fiction, but with fact, that this volume proposes to deal, and this will at once determine the sense in which the word romance is used in the title. Into the story of the Primitive Methodist Church, which is still celebrating its Centenary, there enters to an unusual degree the element of the wonderful and even the mysterious. From the early days the men and women who had been associated with it were filled with astonishment as they contemplated the humility of its origin, the lowliness of its agents, and the marvellous manner in which it had grown. Such sayings as: "What hath God wrought!" "It is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes," were constantly on their lips. Many of the elements of romance which arrest our attention were not visible to the makers of Primitive Methodism. But the same is true of all great movements. The

actors therein saw chiefly the stern realities with which they were called to deal. The lighter side, the beauty and the wonder, were scarcely perceived, if at all, till long afterwards, and often only by those who were able to study the whole from a position of comparative detachment.

History records the hard facts associated with the origin and growth of the Primitive Methodist Church. In dealing with the romance of the story, the facts will still have to be considered ; but they will form the background of the picture, and emphasis will be laid upon those elements which, whether viewed " through memory's sunset air," or in the light of all that goes before and after, inspire us with wonder and surprise. If in some sense there is attempted here an imaginative reconstruction of the facts of a remarkable story, it is done strictly within the limits of historic accuracy, and without having recourse to anything of the nature of fiction. This is done in the hope that many may be induced to read it who would be repelled by a merely historical presentation of the facts.

But there is another sense in which the word romance may be fitly employed to describe the story that is to be told in these pages. In his " Modernism and Romance," Mr. R. A. Scott-James defines the term as conveniently designating the feeling which comes to us " when suddenly a thought, an action, the gleam of a moment makes us leap to our feet as at a vision, as at the promise of some

instant fulfilment of life." Is not this in its highest sense

> "The light that never was on sea or land,
> The consecration, and the poet's dream?"

The multitudes of men and women who made Primitive Methodism may not have been poets, and yet they had this gleam, this vision splendid. If the valiant knight of old was moved by a sublime vision, and went forth under its inspiration on distant crusades and into strange lands, the men and women who figure in these pages were also inspired by a glorious vision that stirred their blood—the vision of a regenerated world, a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. They knew nothing of the weapons carnal, these weak women and toil-worn men, but never did knight-errant go forth on his sacred quest with a loftier vision, a nobler courage, or a sterner resolve.

The Church needs such stories as this to-day. For the moment she is oppressed by the thought of the terrible problems of the new time. She has allowed the bitterness of her enemies to daunt her, and is obsessed by the new revelations which the modern press furnishes of the difficulty and complexity of the work requiring to be done. She must have a new vision or the people will perish. There must come to her a fresh realisation of the true sources of her strength, and of the splendid possibilities that lie before her in this twentieth

century. And the story of how Primitive Methodism, without wealth, or learning, or social prestige, transformed rural England and set in motion a thousand regenerative forces throughout the land, may well serve to nerve her with the hope, the courage and the all-conquering enthusiasm which should characterise the "Knights of the Spirit."

Then there is a romance of beginnings. We never consider anything that has grown to greatness without being reminded of its beginning, and the contrast is always suggestive of romance. The close of the nineteenth century, and the Jubilee of English railways, furnish familiar illustrations of this. And does not the fascination of English history consist, to a very considerable degree, in tracing back our empire, our political constitution, and our social and religious conditions to the misty past where they had their origin?

In endeavouring to reconstruct imaginatively, in this Centenary time, the England and its life of one hundred years ago, an atmosphere of romance gathers round us at once. We marvel at the changes that have been wrought. It was a different world in which our fathers lived and moved and had their being. And in days of pessimism, when we are disposed to think that everything is on the down-grade, an excellent corrective is to plunge into the past and endeavour to see the world with the eyes and hearts of the men who made the Primitive Methodist Church. We have our problems

to-day, and many of them are perplexing enough; but they are not as great as those which the founders of Primitive Methodism faced and triumphantly solved, and the forces which make for righteousness at the beginning of the twentieth century are immeasurably greater than those which were in operation at the dawn of the nineteenth century. The higher moral sensitiveness of the new age has rendered us keenly alive to much which men of an earlier time scarcely heeded at all, and the greatness of the men who set themselves to cope with the moral evils they saw around them one hundred years ago is seen not least in the fact that a state of things which was tolerable to so many was intolerable to them.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the great Evangelical revival, originated by Wesley and Whitefield, had spent itself. The spiritual passion which inspired Wesley with his world-wide commission and drove him from the narrow confines and cramping bonds of an effete establishment into the freer air of England's fields and market squares, that he might proclaim to the multitudes the simple Evangel of the love of God to dying men, had somewhat waned for the time in most of his followers and successors. The voice of the field preacher was heard no more in the land. The masses in rural England were outside the churches and largely uncared for. Whole villages were without any semblance of religious life. A drinking,

swearing, fox-hunting clergyman often held the cure of souls—if a clergyman was to be found at all,—who would occasionally join the people in their Sabbath breaking and brutal sports. To a very large extent the light of the Established Church had become darkness, and over vast areas of the country exerted no influence for good at all. This was so in a much less degree among the Nonconformist Churches, which possessed some great preachers, and here and there, amid the darkness, kept the flame of spiritual life burning. But even they seemed quite incapable of arresting the attention of the masses of rural England, or of bringing them under the power of the Gospel.

The moral condition of the people was appalling. Over vast stretches of country "religious indifference, stolid apathy, degraded ignorance, brutal sports, Sabbath desecration" prevailed. In East Anglia, for example, Sunday was the usual day for gardening and sport, "and no stranger could go through many of the villages without being molested and insulted." In many a parish there was not one person who professed religion. "No! not even the parson!" Cock-fighting and bull-baiting were among the favourite amusements of the people, and poaching one of their least immoral diversions. Bullstake and Fighting Cocks survive as names of places to-day. The wakes of Staffordshire were scenes of coarse revelry, pugilism, and debauchery. Originally a Church Festival, the wake had degenerated into

"a Satanic revel—a time of licence, an annual saturnalia." The masses were just emerging from semi-barbarism. Pugilism, drunkenness and smuggling were quite common, and all classes were addicted to profane swearing.

So great is the difference between then and now, that it is almost impossible for us to reconstruct for ourselves the England of one hundred years ago. The whole religious tone of the country has changed, and forces have everywhere been called into activity which scarcely then existed. Ten thousand centres of religious life are to be found in rural England, sweetening the moral atmosphere around, which had no existence at the beginning of the last century.

It is not pretended that this wonderful change has been brought about by any single agency. Many factors have combined to effect this transformation, some of them not essentially religious in their character. But one of the most potent among them all has been Primitive Methodism. In support of this statement a multitude of witnesses might be cited. These witnesses have recorded the result of their observation in various parts of the country, and whether among the potters of Staffordshire, the labourers in the east, south, and west of England, the factory operatives of Lancashire and Yorkshire, or the miners of Northumberland and Durham, they bear witness to the extraordinary change wrought in the moral condition of the masses by

the labours of the people called Primitive Methodists. To have securely rooted a religious body, however small, amidst an ungodly population, is a great thing. Its moral influence, direct and indirect, cannot be accurately estimated. In a thousand ways it affects the life of the community, even in the case of those who have never associated themselves with it. Its witness for the spiritual, the moral, and the religious is not without its effect, even on the most hardened and indifferent.

This is what in thousands of cases Primitive Methodism accomplished in the early part of the nineteenth century. We hear much of the influence of an Oxford movement over the religious life of England; but working at the very roots of our English life there was an East Anglian movement, a Staffordshire movement, a Yorkshire and Lancashire movement, and a movement in Northumberland and Durham, as far reaching, and far more wholesome, because soundly Protestant, in its character.

But all these movements were one movement: they originated from a common centre, and the romance of the origin of this Church, as the Centenary celebrations have shown, gathers round that rugged hill in Staffordshire, Mow Cop. But for the first English Camp Meeting on Mow Cop, May 31st, 1807, the Primitive Methodist Church, so far as we can see, would never have come into existence. True, Mow Cop itself was the outcome of a religious

revival; but it was the Camp Meeting which gave its distinctive character as well as permanence to the religious movement out of which it sprang. Over a wide area it made the revival known and invested it with an element of romance which hitherto had been lacking.

But to understand the Camp Meeting we must understand the movement out of which it came. Before Mow Cop you have Daniel Shubotham, and before Daniel Shubotham, Hugh Bourne. To these two men there was no romance associated with the circumstances which made them actors in this great religious drama. They would have laughed at the idea, unless they could have had explained to them that the word implied a vision of the highest fulfilment of life. It was certainly a serious business to them. We, however, see these things in the light of one hundred wonderful years. We see much that the actors could not see, and of which they were unconscious. We see the roots of their religious life going back into the past, and commencing those wonderful ramifications through the soil of England which in the next century were destined to enrich and fertilise its life religiously socially, and politically. And the most matter-of-fact person cannot contemplate all this without being made conscious of the stirring within him of a sense of the romantic, the wonderful, the Divine.

This movement began, as all great movements

begin, with one man. When we come to consider the founders of Primitive Methodism, we shall find two outstanding figures, and be prepared to accord equal, if diverse, honour to them for calling into existence and shaping the character of this Church. But in the order of time, as well as in some other respects, Hugh Bourne first claims our attention. And here again we find the romance of beginning. To discover the tiny rivulet out of which a great river takes its rise is a fascinating pursuit. And when at length, away up among the hills, we look upon the little spring, and contrast it with the mighty stream which afar off empties itself into the sea, we marvel.

To find the origin of Primitive Methodism we must go to the moorland. The man who was to shape a great religious movement was himself moulded amid the silence and seclusion of the uplands. Bleak, desolate, lonely, with no road, public or private, not even a foot-road to it or anywhere near it, Fordhays Farm, in the parish of Stoke-upon-Trent, Staffordshire, must be regarded as the source whence this wonderful river takes its rise. The little stream was powerfully influenced by its environment, although it was a strong, rugged, silent, and self-contained nature that was shaped amid these upland solitudes, and withal, one singularly shy, timid, and bashful. To the last day of his life his moorland origin was manifest in Hugh Bourne. It made him what he was.

And yet the moorland cannot account for Hugh Bourne. We must go further back and climb higher than any merely material environment. It was only the natural man, so to speak, that Fordhays Farm shaped; and much as that natural man may have had to do with the making of Primitive Methodism, alone it would have been utterly incapable of either originating or shaping it. The spiritual man was of spiritual origin.

Born April 3rd, 1772, Hugh Bourne might have been considered singularly unfortunate in his parentage, were it not that we so often find that even the disadvantages of early years are, in the Providence of God, turned to splendid account. There was no one to lead this shy, serious child into the light of God. His father, Joseph Bourne —farmer, wheel-wright, and timber dealer—was passionate, drunken, dissolute, but a stiff Churchman and a derider of Methodism and Dissent. A violent, churlish man, we cannot imagine his influence to have been other than evil. But his wife, Ellen Steel, to use her maiden name, if she did not know the way of salvation until taught it by her son, taught that son much that was of immense value to him in later years—thrift, patience, endurance, the fear of God and the love of righteousness. Then, too, as she sat at her spinning wheel, she taught her children to read. And when we remember that it was by reading that Hugh Bourne was led into the light, this was no small matter.

But the Spirit of God was this man's great teacher. When but a small boy, and without the knowledge or aid of any man, he was painfully convinced of sin, and for twenty sorrowful years was groping for the light. He himself has told us that he had no one to take him by the hand and instruct him in "the mystery of faith, and the nature of a free, full, and present salvation." If he had only had some such guide, "How happy would it have been for me!" he exclaims. Possibly. But not, perchance, for the world at large. Hugh Bourne learned many things during those sorrowful years that were essential to his equipment for the work of his life. God was teaching him, even through pain and anguish, to know the evil of sin and to be kind and pitiful to little children. The long night of darkness may have been necessary, also, in order to a full appreciation of the joy and gladness of salvation. And so through these sad and lonely years we see this man being prepared of God to be a herald of deliverance, and a trainer and guide of heralds, who shall have a tremendous grip of the awful fact of sin, and a vivid realisation of the freeness and fulness and blessedness of the salvation that is by faith in Jesus Christ.

When the set time arrived the right teachers were forthcoming. But the light was to come by no living voice of preacher, teacher, or friend. And here again we see the hand of Providence, and preparation for future service. This man

must realise through personal experience, in an age when to the masses of the people books were nothing, that literature may be of immense service in the spread of the Kingdom of God. There were Methodists in his neighbourhood, but their inconsistencies had repelled him. Happily, a Methodist neighbour lent him a book which brought him into touch with the founder of Methodism himself. Amongst other things, the book contained Wesley's sermon on the Trinity, which relieved the young man's mind of difficulties which had long oppressed him.

But the book contained the life of another Methodist, John Fletcher of Madeley, and it was when reading the letters of this famous saint on "The Spiritual Manifestation of the Son of God," that the way of salvation by faith was made plain. "I believed in my heart," he records; "grace descended, and Jesus Christ manifested Himself to me. My sins were taken away in that instant, and I was filled with all joy and peace in believing. I never knew or thought any one could in this world have such a foretaste of heaven. In an instant I felt I loved God with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength; and I felt a love to all mankind, and a desire that all, whether friends or enemies, might be saved. I heard an inward voice saying: 'Thy iniquity is forgiven and thy sin covered.' Life, light, liberty flowed in upon my soul, and such rapturous joy that I could scarcely tell whether in the body or not."

If Hugh Bourne's conversion in the spring of 1799 was due directly to the influence of his Methodist reading, it must not be supposed that no other influence had been at work at this time. In the warp and woof of his character we shall find another strand in addition to that of early Methodism. If the early Methodists led him into the full light of faith, he was indebted to the Quakers for the first glimmerings of the dawn. In the early part of 1799 he read the books of the first Quakers, and was "enabled to see a little more clearly into the mystery and power of faith." Hence we find after his conversion he debates within himself whether he shall join the Methodists or the Quakers. Some Church he must join, but which? In this dilemma it was to be expected that one who had drunk at the fountain of early Quakerism would wait for Divine guidance. He would take no decisive step until the will of God should be made plain.

And there is an element of romance in the way in which the light came. Of the Methodism of his own time Hugh Bourne knew nothing, and it was this ignorance which actually made him a Methodist without knowing it. Having read of the love-feasts of the early Methodists, he was anxious to see one for himself. But admission, he found, was by ticket. A certain Methodist farmer, John Birchenough by name, of Stanley Fields, undertook to secure the necessary passport. He did not explain that a ticket of admission to a Methodist

lovefeast was also a ticket of membership in the Methodist Church. "In vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird," especially one so shy as Hugh Bourne. John Birchenough wished to end the young man's hesitancy and commit him definitely to Methodism; and so, while telling him the truth, he did not tell him the whole truth. The ticket would admit to the lovefeast at any rate; for the rest he would trust in God and the influence of the lovefeast itself. Before going to the Burslem lovefeast Hugh Bourne discovered the precise significance of the ticket he had received, but decided that he could still draw back if it should not seem the will of God that he should associate himself with the Methodists. The lovefeast, however, was a revelation which compelled him to confess that the path of duty had been made plain, and at its close he was "heart and hand a Methodist." The next Sunday, which was in June, 1799, he took the step which committed him to Methodism by joining the class at Ridgway. It is interesting to note that Hugh Bourne became a member with the Methodists, and was, nine years afterwards, expelled from membership, without at the time being aware of the fact.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Hugh Bourne Purchases Oak Timber at Dales Green	19
Spiritual Destitution of Mow Cop Neighbourhood	20
How Hugh Bourne began His Work	21
Daniel Shubotham's Conversion	22
Matthias Bayley Joins the "Conversation Preachers"	22
First Attempts at a Prayer Meeting	23
Wonderful Effects of the Prayer Meetings	24
A Dangerous Lunatic Healed	24
A Spontaneous Outburst of Evangelism	25
Hugh Bourne's Spiritual Oversight of Converts	25
A Shy Man thrust into Leadership	26
Hugh Bourne's First Sermon	27
The Evolution of a New Form of Religious Activity	29
Harriseahead Chapel Built	32

CHAPTER II.

OF THE MAKING OF ITS MOSES.

AND now we shall find this new convert to Methodism, already steeped in the spirit of primitive Methodism, making those tentative movements towards Evangelism which possess yet again the romance of beginnings. Hugh Bourne, in the moment of his conversion, was filled with love to God and men, and naturally longed to bring others into a like experience. And he at once found himself in circumstances which greatly intensified this desire. His early years had been spent in following his father's employment of a carpenter and wheel-wright, working also on the farm. He was now twenty-eight years of age, and in business for himself. The purchase of a quantity of oak timber, on a farm called Dales Green, brought him into the neighbourhood of Mow Cop, the rugged mountain which was afterwards to be inseparably associated with the origin of Primitive Methodism. Harriseahead was a colliery half-a-mile east of Mow Cop, and Dales Green was situated between

the two. Mow Cop itself is about three miles north-west of Bemersley, the home of the Bournes. On this south-western point of the Pennine range, which rises here to the height of 1091 feet, we have the centre of the region in which originated one of the great movements of English religious life in the nineteenth century. It was a rugged, bleak country, with only a few grey, roughly built cottages dotted here and there. The people were unusually ignorant and degraded, especially in the neighbourhood of the collieries of Harriseahead and Kidsgrove.

But it must not be imagined that in its drunkenness, violence and profanity the region of Mow Cop stood alone ; all over the land might have been found at the beginning of the nineteenth century places just as degraded and spiritually destitute. The origin of a great spiritual movement in that quarter has acted like a searchlight ; but as the movement spread over the country it brought into view a similar state of things.

Plunged into this alien atmosphere, Hugh Bourne trembled for his life. Could his soul's life be preserved amid such utter spiritual destitution ? But he was to win not only timber here but his own soul. In losing the means of grace he found his mission. That mission was to win souls. No more romantic story of evangelism was ever told than that of how this shy, timid, self-distrustful man began his work. Having written an account of

his conversion, he was constrained to put it into the hands of the village smith, Thomas Maxfield, one day when he was on a visit to the smithy. The impression thus made may be gathered from a remark of the smith to Daniel Shubotham shortly afterwards. A distant kinsman of Hugh Bourne, Shubotham was a man of extraordinary wickedness and profanity. But the Spirit of God was at work within him, and railing at Hugh Bourne one day in the smithy as a man who was no company for anybody, the simple reply of the smith: "Aye, lad, but he's a safe (saved) mon," came as a spark among dry tinder, and instantly leaping to his feet Daniel exclaimed: "Then I'll be a safe man, for I'll go and join him."

This brought the two kinsmen together, and they had much talk of a general kind on religious things. Bourne discovered that, despite his religious talk, Daniel was not converted, and on Christmas Eve, 1800, he was in much sorrow and heaviness because his cousin was "not born of God." Next day he set out to visit Daniel, taking with him a written account of his own conversion and a book by Barclay the Quaker. From the book he read a portion, with a view to removing an erroneous notion from his cousin's mind. Rising at length to take his leave, he requested his kinsman's company a little way. Then did Hugh Bourne preach the Gospel to Daniel Shubotham with all his might, his text being: "I will love Him, and

will manifest myself to Him." It seemed to the preacher in his intense earnestness and vehemence that little impression was made; but he was afterwards to learn that "every word went through" his single auditor. That Christmas Day sermon, and the conversion of the solitary hearer, was the beginning of Primitive Methodism.

Ere he reached home Daniel Shubotham was created anew, and when he found some of his old companions at his house for the purpose of playing cards, he informed them that if they would not go with him to heaven he would not go with them to hell. He then opened his Bible and began to read to them. After listening to him awhile, his friends rose and left, saying that Hugh Bourne had driven him mad, much to the alarm of his wife.

Soon afterwards Daniel made the acquaintance of another converted collier, Matthias Bayley, and ere long the whole neighbourhood rang with the doings of these three men, for they became "conversation preachers," preaching the Gospel to all, good or bad, rough or smooth. Let it not be supposed, however, there was anything regular or organised about these proceedings. Everything was tentative. We are amid the romance of beginnings. Having awakened four colliers to a sense of sin, our three evangelists were unable to lead them into the light of assurance. The converting work was new to them. The idea of a prayer meeting was suggested, and Hugh Bourne

offered a Burslem Methodist a weekly sum to come and conduct one. Next he applied to the travelling preacher, but without success. None of the three evangelists had ever prayed in public, and each thought himself incapable of doing so. The story of the first attempt at a prayer meeting is beautifully significant. The prayer book was searched for a prayer suitable to the occasion, but they found nothing there to show them how to pray for the deliverance of souls labouring under conviction of sin. Since, however, God had heard them when they prayed for the forgiveness of sin, they concluded God would hear them in this also. So they began and God gave them great blessing.

Next a regular prayer meeting was announced to be held at the house of one Jane Hall. Heaven was opened that night in the soul of Hugh Bourne. He had been astonished at the excellence of Matthias Bayley's prayer at the opening of the meeting, but Matthias himself was so astounded at the power with which Hugh Bourne afterwards prayed, that he felt like never trying to pray in public again; and it was only when he learned how Hugh Bourne had been blessed under his prayer that he consented to proceed.

From that time the prayer meetings were held regularly every Tuesday evening, and ere long souls began to be converted. The new converts became "famous talkers for the Lord." They "set forth the Gospel without ceremony." Some-

one has pointed out that every great religious movement has been an affair of conversation at the outset. For more than a century the Christian religion was almost entirely sustained and propagated by conversations. The world first heard of Methodism through the talks of the "Holy Club" at Oxford. Conversation and prayer meeting shook the whole region round Mow Cop, and soon that part of the country was "moralised."

The prayer meetings were wonderful seasons of spiritual wrestling, and faith and power. With heart and voice the people laid siege to heaven, and streams of blessing descended. The noise was often heard at a great distance. The most fearful blasphemer of the whole country side heard the noise of a prayer meeting right up to her own house at Mow Cop, a mile and a half distant, and was thereby awakened and soundly converted. A dangerous lunatic, who had been turned out of an asylum incurable and was chained in his brother's house at Mow Cop, became the subject of prayer. A prayer meeting was held at his house, and as the people began their intercessions, the maniac rushed furiously to the end of his chain. As the meeting "rose in faith" he fell like an ox, but when it sank into doubt he sprang up again in fury. And so the alternations of faith and fear on the part of the people were regularly accompanied in the maniac with alternations of fury and falling down, until at length faith won a great victory, and the

poor sufferer broke into loud praises to God. In this state he continued till he died, full of praise and gratitude to the last. A gang of poachers, too, was broken up, the first of a long series of such reformations destined to change the face of rural England and influence the course of history.

In all this, and much more yet to be indicated, there was no thought of founding a new denomination. The revival in the region of Mow Cop was due to a spontaneous outburst of evangelism on the part of the few converts Hugh Bourne had gathered round him. As we have seen, it was not by preaching in the ordinary sense of the word that the work was carried on, but by conversation and by prayer meetings of the most extraordinary power and enthusiasm. Hugh Bourne described these prayer meetings as Israelitish, quoting, in explanation, Ezra iii. 12, 13: "And all the people shouted with a great shout . . . . and the noise was heard afar off." Probably nothing quite like these meetings, and the revival associated with them, had ever been seen in Methodism before. Meanwhile, although the converts became in some sense associated with the Wesleyans, and were formed into classes, the spiritual oversight of them devolved very largely on Hugh Bourne, who was still detained in the neighbourhood by contracts into which he had entered for the wood work of Stonetrough Colliery and certain carpentry at an adjoining farm.

Partly owing to his experience and his reputation for book learning, Hugh Bourne was looked up to as a leader. Not that he ever thought of leadership himself. His extreme shyness and timidity made him shrink from anything of the kind. Here, as in everything connected with the movement, we find the charm of spontaneity. Just as John Wesley was led step by step irresistibly as it were in the path which resulted in the founding of Methodism, so was Hugh Bourne. At Ridgway, where he himself had met in class, he might have become a class leader, but his timidity stood in the way, and necessity was not laid upon him. But at Kidsgrove there was nobody to take charge of the converts, and so his constitutional and almost unconquerable aversion to a responsible public position was overcome. He travelled three miles each way every week from Bemersley to Kidsgrove for this work. And now Providence was about to thrust this bashful, retiring man into a more public position still. To us it may seem a most natural thing that this talker of salvation sermons should become a preacher; but amid all the activities of the last eighteen months, he never seems to have thought of preaching. And it was only to meet a pressing need that he at length consented to make an attempt. The only preaching service on the Cheshire side of Mow Cop was at the house of Joseph Pointon, and this was held every alternate Sunday afternoon; too little, surely,

to satisfy the appetites of people in the full tide of revival. Why should not Hugh Bourne, with his book learning, his gifts of prayer and religious conversation, preach on the Sunday when nobody was planned? Pressed to take the service on July 12th, 1801, he, with fear and trembling, consented.

The service was widely published. It is significant of much that some days before the service Hugh Bourne should have suggested to Joseph Pointon that it should be held in the open air. Already his mind was occupied with the methods of early Methodism when field preaching was in vogue. But apparently Pointon thought this would be an irregular, if not a disorderly proceeding, and opposed it. But when the time came the crowd was so great that it became necessary to adjourn to the field adjoining the house. But it was only when he saw the house packed and numbers still waiting for admission that the prejudices of Joseph Pointon yielded reluctantly with the admission: "Then it is like to be out-of-doors."

In the early part of the day the preacher was so agitated that he could not lead the Kidsgrove class, but spent the time in prayer for the needed help. His dread was of breaking down, and so injuring the cause. His agitation was probably none the less when, in place of the dozen people he had expected, he found a crowd. Tremblingly he announced his text: "By faith Noah, being

warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Heb. xi. 7. If the sermon was novel, so was the preacher. The shrinking shyness of the man was such that he could not look at his congregation, but held his hand before his face, which served as a kind of screen; a characteristic that remained with him both in preaching and conversation through life. Strange leader of a great religious movement this! But then that movement was to be not in the wisdom of man but in the power of God.

From the ark of the text the preacher passed to the spiritual ark into which all men are invited as a means of escaping from the fiery deluge which shall overwhelm the wicked. Then losing the thread of his discourse, he hesitated, and was like to break down. Suddenly he recollected that he could often speak with great freedom to a single individual: why not now talk out of the fulness of his religious experience of the way of salvation to this crowd. He did so, and spoke with freedom and effect. Greatest encouragement of all, one soul was converted.

Two things made this service memorable. It was the first out-door service held in connection with what came to be regarded as the revival of primitive Methodism. Not for more than ten years

was the word spelt with a capital, and adopted as the name of a new religious community, but one of the most characteristic notes of the new movement was struck that day for the first time, and six years later, in that very field, the first Camp Meeting was to be held.

Then the service on this memorable occasion was followed by a prayer meeting. At the close of the sermon the preacher, completely exhausted with the nervous strain, was fain to retire to the house to recover himself. His brother James gave out a hymn, but instead of concluding in the usual way, a course of mighty prayer followed, interspersed with brief exhortations. Here was not only the miniature Camp Meeting, but a revelation of the utility of following the preaching of the Gospel with prayer. The preacher soon recovered and returned to the meeting, and what he saw that afternoon was destined to bear valuable fruit in the days to come.

In the revival movement round Mow Cop we see the gradual evolution of a type of religious activity possessing such marked features that it was soon styled a New Way. In many respects it was only the restoration of an old way which had fallen into desuetude. It was primitive, as distinguished from what Hugh Bourne called modern, Methodism. The modern Methodists disparaged revivalism and old-time Methodism. "All persons enthusiastically or schismatically disposed," wrote

Jabez Bunting, "are dangerous in our Connexion to its peace and permanency; and the more pious in their general character, the more dangerous." This may help to explain how afterwards Hugh Bourne and others were regarded by official Methodism. Here was the new wine destined to burst the old bottles.

Very early we find the old standards objecting to the new way that had sprung up in the neighbourhood of Mow Cop, and the influence of two Goldenhill potters who began to attend the meetings at Harriseahead soon served to bring the revival there to a standstill. For a time Matthias Bayley and Daniel Shubotham were influenced by these men, but having discovered the practical consequences of their teaching, they were glad to get rid of them, and the lesson learned was not soon forgotten. This was the first conflict between primitive and modern Methodism so far as this story is concerned, but the same thing in varied forms was going on elsewhere. Around Mow Cop, however, the new type acquired such marked individuality that it persisted and ultimately survived.

The explanation of the delay of the Wesleyan authorities in taking over the fruits of the revival is probably to be found here, as well as of the fact that Hugh Bourne was never put upon the plan. Meanwhile, the Harriseahead miners wanted a chapel built, and Daniel Shubotham having promised

a corner of his garden as a site, Hugh Bourne pledged himself to find the timber. But having dug out the foundations, the miners were at the end of their resources, and ultimately Hugh Bourne had to shoulder the responsibility and see the thing through. It was a costly business for him in every way. While the building was in progress one of the gables was blown down and the roof fell in. The whole burden of the undertaking forthwith rested on one man's shoulders. This chapel the Burslem authorities were, by dint of much importunity, afterwards induced to take over, and Hugh Bourne was authorised to gather into classes the fruits of the revival.

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Congleton Love Feast	33
A Class-Meeting moves the Country	34
What Led to the Conversion of William Clowes	34
Birth and Ancestry of Clowes	35
Clowes' Apprenticeship	36
The Physical Endowments of Clowes	37
Clowes at a Mock Prayer Meeting	38
Clowes Seized with Conviction at a Dance	38
The Marriage of Clowes	39
Clowes' Orgies at Hull	41
Conversion of Clowes at a Prayer Meeting	44
Clowes Draws up Rules for Regulating His Life	46
Clowes Opens His House for Meetings	46
How Clowes Prepared for the Wakes	47
Bourne and Clowes make Acquaintance	47
Local Preachers meet at the House of Clowes	48
Crusade Against Drink and Sabbath Desecration	49
Joseph Smith Attempts to Regulate the Meetings	50
Clowes Begins to Exhort	51
Bourne and Clowes Visit James Crawfoot	53
The First "Travelling Preacher"	53

CHAPTER III.

OF THE MOULDING OF ITS MIGHTY EVANGELIST.

HAVING watched so far the making of Hugh Bourne as one of the chief instruments afterwards to be used in the founding and guidance of a new religious movement, we have now to glance at an incident which gave an additional touch to his moulding, and at the same time had much to do with the preparation of a second instrument who, in the coming years, was to be associated with him in his great life work. In the autumn of 1804 Hugh Bourne came into contact with some revivalistic Methodists at a lovefeast at Congleton. These men spoke much of a "clean heart," of "holiness," of "full sanctification." Hugh Bourne was greatly blessed at the lovefeast, and was deeply impressed by the earnestness, faith, and zeal exhibited by the Stockport revivalists.

At the class meeting at Harriseahead the next evening, there was experienced a time of extraordinary spiritual power, and the greatest out-

pouring of the Holy Spirit Hugh Bourne had ever witnessed. In this meeting he was humbled down, and seeking it by simple faith, obtained the blessing of which he had heard so much the previous evening. The surrounding country was moved by this meeting, and there followed such a season of religious awakening as had not hitherto been known.

Perhaps the most important event to which this revival led was the conversion of William Clowes, who was afterwards to be so inseparably associated with Hugh Bourne in the founding of Primitive Methodism. A wider contrast could not be imagined than that presented by these two men, and this contrast is in nothing more striking than in the circumstances of their early life. Bourne's early years were marked by great seriousness and moral behaviour ; those of Clowes were wild and dissipated in the extreme. Yet both were from an early age the subject of deep religious impressions. That these impressions in the case of William Clowes issued ultimately in his conversion may be distinctly traced to the Congleton lovefeast held by the Stockport evangelists ; for it was at a Harriseahead lovefeast shortly afterwards that James Steele and other Methodists from Tunstall were mightily baptised by the Holy Spirit and carried the revival to Tunstall, and it was during this revival that William Clowes was converted.

The shaping of this new instrument of evangelism

is a truly romantic story. Born March 12th, 1780, in a workman's cottage in an obscure court at Burslem, William Clowes was yet descended on the mother's side from the famous Josiah Wedgwood, who bore by royal grant and the good pleasure of Queen Charlotte the title of "the Queen's Potter." Some of his forebears had built, in 1740, the largest house in Burslem, known as "the Big House," but his father, Samuel Clowes, was only a working potter, indolent and dissipated. Here we are reminded of the circumstances of the Bourne family, and the resemblance is still further completed by the fact that though Mrs. Clowes was of amiable disposition and moral deportment, having been brought up in the Church of England, she was led into the joy of assurance by her son.

When four years of age Clowes had a severe attack of smallpox, the scars of which he carried to his grave. At ten we find him at a prayer meeting, where he wept bitterly, under a clear conviction of sin. Later his convictions were such that if he had had some experienced Christian to take him by the hand he would have been converted. In the absence of such guidance he drifted into evil courses. Richly endowed by nature, of high social qualities and immense vitality, he lacked parental influence, home discipline, and intellectual interests. The result may be imagined.

His school-days were few, but what education he got at this period was probably obtained at the

Ancient Free School, Burslem. At ten he was apprenticed to his father's trade of potter, with his uncle, Joseph Wedgwood, at the "Churchyard Works," on the site of which now stand the new National Schools. Mould running and wedging were the chief work of a potter's apprentice in those days, hard and often cruel toil, now done by machinery. The apprentice placed a lump of clay upon a plaster block, cut it in two with a piece of wire, then lifting one half above his head would bring it down upon the lower half to mix them, repeating the process till the clay was brought to the consistency of something like putty. This alternated with mould running. "Imagine a mere boy running in and out of the stove room, winter and summer, with its blazing iron stove, his speed determined by his master's speed at the work." Failure to be at the bench at the required moment would often be followed by oaths and threats and brutal blows. The hours were from five and six o'clock in the morning till six, seven, or eight o'clock at night, and the wages a shilling a week.

Ancestry soon showed itself in the boy Clowes. Sharp, active, apt, he gave early promise of becoming an expert craftsman. From generations of potters he inherited not only great physical strength, but the deftness, the skill of eye and hand which enabled him quickly to attain high proficiency. He was soon in the receipt of extra pay, and it is significant that with this he sought to improve his education

by attending a night school. His apprenticeship completed, Clowes went in for a second that he might learn turning. This again completed he was a master in his craft and able to earn a high wage.

But it was not only in his trade that he excelled. Physically he was rarely endowed and developed. An athlete, few could excel him in foot racing, jumping, boxing, and dancing. He was a magnificent animal, splendidly proportioned, harmoniously developed, of muscle and sinew, force and fire all compact. To all this were added the attributes of an impressive personality—a massive brow, bold, piercing eyes, a voice of great compass and sweetness, and a marvellous gift of personal magnetism. Here was a leader of men, but in what would he lead? At first he was a leader in folly and wickedness. His passions ran riot. The leading spirit in athletics, he was also a leader in the flowing bowl and the ribald song at the Turk's Head. There he was a favourite vocalist, and the song he most frequently chose began:

> "Come push the grog about,
> Strong beer drowns all our sorrows."

Dancing was his great accomplishment, and it is not surprising in the case of one so exquisitely proportioned and so finely developed that he became a prize-dancer and challenged all England to compete with him. His dancing associations speedily completed his corruption. To dancing he

added gambling and pugilism, drunkenness and profanity. It were difficult to say in which he attained to the worst eminence. Whatever he did was done with his might.

During the wakes at Leek we find him and his companions, after the wildest and most prolonged excesses, actually holding a mock prayer meeting in the sanded parlour of the public-house. This was too much for less hardened sinners, and the experts in superfluous naughtiness were turned out to finish their burlesque of sacred things at the Market Cross. Their money gone, they resorted to the most desperate devices to obtain more, even mortgaging their persons to the recruiting sergeant for three guineas.

Here was surely the romance of wickedness, but through it all an inner voice was ever speaking to William Clowes, which at the very height of his sinful pleasures would often turn them to gall and bitterness. As he sang his favourite song the voice was heard within him saying: "For all these things God will bring thee into judgment." After indulging in the vilest and most extreme profanity his mind would be seized with great horror. It became to him a matter of annoyance that he could not swear like the others without strong remorse. In the midst of a dance at the Town Hall, Burslem, he was seized with the most extraordinary mental distress owing to his guilt before God. Without a word of explanation to any one, he turned his

back on his gay companions and ran home. In his distraction he roused his parents, and they, mistaking the nature of his seizure, treated him for an attack of colic, dosing him first with gin and then with tobacco smoke. This made him sick in body as well as in soul. He begged his mother to pray for him, but she told him to pray for himself. This he did, vowing that if God would spare his life it should be devoted to His service. This brought some little relief, and he retired to rest.

From this time onward, until finally arrested in his mad career, his erratic movements were largely inspired by a desire to escape from himself and from the voice of an ever accusing conscience. His evil associations led him astray time after time, in spite of his good resolutions. Marriage suggested itself as a means of escape from his bonds. In the bonds of matrimony he might secure freedom from the fascination of evil companions. At any rate he courted and married Hannah Rogers, the ceremony taking place July 28th, 1800, in the old parish church of Newcastle-under-Lyme. The young woman's friends had sought to dissuade her from allying herself with so fearfully wild a character. She was disposed to abandon her profligate lover, when a dream, in which she saw William Clowes as her future husband a changed man and in a position of great influence and usefulness, induced her to risk the marriage. Need we be surprised? Clowes must have been a lover of no ordinary

fascination, and, it may be added, of no common fickleness. So uncertain was he of himself, and the step he was taking, that he confesses that had not the church doors been fastened to prevent interruption from the people without, he would have escaped unmarried, and left his bride mortified by disappointment and shame.

Marriage, alas, did not bring reformation, and the great soul-conflict went on. To overcome his drunken habits, Clowes resolved to allow himself only half-a-pint of ale a day, which, as his biographer remarks, was for him just half-a-pint too much. The wildest dissipation alternated with desperate efforts at amendment. Once, after a mad plunge into sin, his agonies of remorse drove him to a Methodist chapel, to the astonishment of the congregation. On another occasion he was so distressed with a sense of sin that he burst into tears in the presence of his wife, but did not reveal the cause till a day or two afterwards, when he took her for a walk by the side of a canal, where he revealed to her his anxiety to serve God and regularly attend the Methodist chapel. She saw no necessity for either weeping or going to chapel, and counselled industry and sobriety. Indeed, she was afraid he was going insane. Secretly the distracted husband took a solemn oath of amendment, which, alas, was soon broken.

Shortly afterwards he one day took violent offence at something done by his wife and her

mother, and in a paroxysm of rage struck the wall of the house and left the town. With only his mother's prayer book in his possession, and without a penny in his pocket, he walked to Warrington, reading, meditating, weeping by the way. Arrived there he obtained employment, but one day entered a public-house with some fellow workmen without knowing that it was such, and was urged to drink. He yielded to temptation, not having the courage to reveal his oath to his companions. Thinking his damnation sealed, he gave the reins to his passions, and plunged once more into the wildest dissipation.

But amid all this he endured the deepest anguish of spirit, and was the subject of the most awful terror of damnation. Again and again he vowed reformation, but his vows were invariably broken. "Sometimes," he writes in his Journal, "I used to walk in solitary and unfrequented places, wishing that I was a bird or a beast, or anything else that was not accountable to the tribunal of heaven." In sleep he was agitated by terrible dreams, and on awaking would be afraid to look out of bed, thinking the room to be full of devils and damned spirits. Breaking out into profuse perspiration in his terror, he would long for the light of day, so that he might drown his convictions in drink.

Perhaps his wildest orgies were at Hull, where he had obtained most remunerative employment at a new pottery, earning a pound a day. His

recklessness at this time may be gathered from the fact that he and a number of companions actually personated the press-gang at Barton-on-Humber, Clowes dressed in coat and pantaloons of the best superfine, mounted with yellow buttons. But when fighting in a drunken brawl shortly afterwards, he was himself seized by the press-gang. As they escorted him along the street he bolted and ran down Grimsby Lane into Market Street, taking refuge at length in his master's china shop. It was only by the intervention of the keeper of the tavern where the captain lodged, and of his own master, that Clowes was set at liberty. Dismissed with a warning never to be out after nine o'clock at night, he resolved to seek safety in flight, and before nine o'clock next morning was on his way to Tunstall. His long and weary tramp gave him ample opportunity for considering his ways, and he made the usual vows of amendment, which, however, were soon broken when he found himself among his old companions.

His own explanation of these repeated failures is that his attempts at reformation were made in his own strength, and that there had been no real regeneration of his nature. But now deliverance was at hand. In bitter anguish of spirit he one day looked into the prayer book, and his eye fell on the words: "They that eat and drink the Lord's supper unworthily, eat and drink their own damnation." This seemed an unheard of wicked-

ness to which even he could never descend. "Is Thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" The next Sunday some one invited him to go and hear a sermon at Burslem. As it was night, he thought he could steal into the chapel unobserved, and so he accepted the invitation. A lovefeast followed, to which admission was by class tickets, and Clowes was offered the privilege of a ticket by his friend. What a lovefeast was he did not know, but accepted the ticket. This ticket, of course, bore the name of a member of the society and would not be transferable. Just as the door-keeper was about to examine the ticket, a puff of wind blew out the candle. Another light was obtained, but once more, as the official's eye was about to scan the ticket, the candle blew out again. Probably others were waiting admission, and so the ticket was handed back unexamined, with the necessary permission to move on. That meeting seems to have been a time of mingled hope and despair. When the bread and water were handed round it seemed to Clowes that this was a Sacrament, and he recalled the terrible words about partaking unworthily. He trembled from head to foot, and received the bread and water, persuaded that if he sinned after this he would be damned to all eternity. He resolved really to turn over a new leaf. The wonderful testimonies that followed, of deliverance from the guilt and power of sin, inspired hope that even he might find salvation.

On returning home he told his wife where he had been and what he had decided to do. To this she made no objection. True to his resolve, Clowes, next morning, January 20th, 1805, attended a prayer meeting, which was held at seven o'clock. There he cried to God for help, and towards the close of the meeting he was conscious of a wonderful influence working upon him. "What is this?" he asked himself. "This is what the Methodists mean by being converted; yes, this is it. God is converting my soul. In an agony of soul I believed God *would* save me—then I believed He *was* saving me—then I believed He *had* saved me; and it was so." At the close of the service some one asked how he was getting on. "God has pardoned all my sins," was the instant reply. All the people then dropped on their knees and gave thanks to God for his deliverance.

Let it be here observed that the holding of this prayer meeting was due to a revival movement which had its origin in the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Harriseahead Chapel. Having reached Tunstall, it gave the spiritual atmosphere that made possible the conversion of William Clowes and others who were to repeat the type of religious activity which already obtained round Mow Cop, and so form another stream of evangelism which was destined ultimately to unite with the parent stream whence it had taken its rise.

John Bunyan's equipment for his life work was

not completed with his conversion, else "Grace Abounding" had never been written. The "Holy War" began the moment he entered the Kingdom of God. And so that wonderful spiritual experience just described was the beginning of a severe discipline, without which William Clowes could never have become a flaming evangelist. The calmness and apparent lack of excitement in his manner that morning led those present to doubt the reality of his conversion, and his old associates were quite confident they would soon see him in their midst once more. But from that hour he was a changed man. Old things passed away and all things became new.

He first set about paying his debts, and his old scores in Hull and Staffordshire were scrupulously wiped off. He gave notice to the captain of his volunteer corps of his withdrawal from the force. He took this step first, because he deemed it prudent to avoid the evil associations of the volunteer force; and second, because he thought he could use his time better than in military exercises. His master, the officer of the corps, in a storm of rage and blasphemy sought to coerce him into withdrawing his resignation by threats of discharge, but he stood firm, and the storm blew over. His faith and humility were in turn assailed, but having joined the class conducted by James Steele, he got help from the counsel of that sagacious saint, and his deliverance from the trial of the moment was

completed the following Sunday at a love least at Harriseahead, three miles from Tunstall, where he discovered from the experiences of others that the subtle and violent temptations which had assailed him were not peculiar to himself, and made, at the same time, the acquaintance of Daniel Shubotham, a master in all the wiles of Satanic strategy.

The conversion of his wife gave great joy to Clowes, and henceforth they were one in prayer, and service, and devotion to God. From the day of his conversion Clowes became active in the work of evangelism, and each Sabbath day was a season of unremitting toil. Among the seven rules he drew up for the ordering of his life was one limiting his hours of work, so that time might be left for the service of God and the means of grace. Another threw open his house for different religious meetings ; yet another pledged him to take every opportunity of reproving sin and warning his neighbours to flee from the wrath to come. Even beggars were to be invited into the house, and prayer offered on their behalf.

The opening of his house for religious services of various kinds was the beginning of a movement destined to have important consequences. Conversions were frequent at these meetings, and soon the house became too small, which necessitated removal to a larger dwelling. Later we shall see how this, under circumstances of stress, led to the formation of a separate organisation.

Meanwhile, one of the rules Clowes had drawn up for himself, as already indicated, required that he should take every opportunity to reprove sin. The sin of Sabbath desecration specially moved him, and on Sunday morning he would sally forth to expostulate with such butchers, bakers, barbers, grocers, and publicans as he found carrying on their business. Some questioned his sanity, others concluded his religion to be a passing craze which the "wakes" would terminate. On this last point there was a good deal of betting, and it was well that Clowes, distrusting himself, took exceptional precautions to secure Divine equipment for the ordeal. Fasting, prayer, and meditation were resorted to for some days. Then clothed with a Divine power he went forth into the streets of Tunstall, denouncing the shameless profligacy that abounded during the "wakes," to the amazement of the people, who could not understand the marvellous change which had been wrought in this champion of wickedness and folly.

The fame of Clowes now went abroad, and many people resorted to him for religious counsel. An old companion in sin set out to walk from Liverpool, that by the help of Clowes he might get converted. On the way God met the man and gloriously saved him. Amongst the rest, Hugh Bourne visited Clowes, and much spiritual conversation took place between the two men who afterwards were to play such a prominent part in

founding a new Church. Of his new friend Hugh Bourne recorded: "This man is such an example of living by faith as I scarcely ever met with, and which at present I am not able to follow. . . . I stayed advising, instructing, and talking with him till after midnight, when we prayed and parted by force." Clowes was the subject of extraordinary manifestations of the Holy Spirit, which he called "the spirit of burning," and this was one among many of the deep things of God that formed the theme of converse between these two remarkable men. In the days to come there was to be no unhappy theological divergence between the two. In these early conferences they arrived at essentially the same views in regard to the great doctrines of the faith, especially justification and sanctification. These great themes, however, were discussed in the light of Scripture and experience, and thus the bases of their future work were solidly laid. Theory and practice were kept in close association.

Another means employed by Clowes for his improvement in religious knowledge was "A Local Preachers' Meeting," held in his own house. This was really a Methodist Theological Institution, at which papers were read and subjects discussed. In connection with it a library was formed, which was supported by subscriptions, donations and fines. Although Clowes was not a local preacher at this time, he was admitted a member, and so the future evangelist came under intellectual influences that

were afterwards to be of the greatest value. Rapidly the passionate, ignorant, debased prodigal was transformed under these varied forces into an intelligent and devout Christian, a "wonder to many."

The intellectual and religious progress made by Clowes indicated that he who once was a leader in folly and sin, was now to become a leader in Christian service. Discerning this, the minister urged him to take charge of the Society Class at Kidsgrove, two miles from Tunstall. To shepherd and instruct these people, many of whom were in the veriest spiritual childhood, was the very thing to develop Clowes at this period. To get the people "up into faith" was the leader's first care, and then he could easily lead thirty or forty in an hour. Conversions became frequent at these meetings, and the class grew steadily in numbers and power. A second class was placed under his care at Tunstall, and his first act was to spread the matter before God, and, with fasting, ask that the numbers might be doubled in the next quarter. He found leading was not so much a matter of talking to the people as "getting into faith and bringing down the cloud of God's glory." Soon the class grew to such an extent that there was hardly room to kneel.

It is not without significance that very early in this religious movement there occurred a collision with the drink trade. A crusade against Sabbath

desecration was begun by the formation of an association which met in the house of Mr. Joseph Smith, Tunstall. From expostulation the association passed to coercion, by invoking the strong arm of the law. Several persons of various classes were convicted and fined. The publicans scented danger to their trade, and with characteristic subtlety struck at the association through the medium of the Circuit Steward. The Steward of the Burslem circuit was a wine and spirit merchant, and supplied the public-houses with spirits. This gentleman was informed that unless he did his best to suppress the association he might expect no more business. The superintendent preacher was consulted, a meeting called, and forthwith the proceedings of the association were publicly condemned and its members threatened with expulsion from the Methodist Society. Clowes and his fellow labourers bowed to the storm, and the association was dissolved.

This was not the only attempt made to control the fiery ardour of these evangelists. Another was operated through the Mr. Joseph Smith in whose house the association had held its meetings. For the cottage prayer meetings, which had become such a means of blessing, the kitchen of this good man was offered, and here services of great power were held. These meetings were often noisy and unconventional, and an attempt was made through Mr. Smith to reduce them to order. A series of regulations was prepared, forbidding loud praying,

vain repetitions, and the use of such petitions as: "Send the fire." Moreover, a sort of portable pulpit was constructed out of a chest of drawers, and each person who prayed was required to enter this enclosure. But the new life was not thus to be cribbed, cabined, and confined. The whole thing broke down at the first meeting. James Nixon was proceeding to argue the question with Mr. Smith, when Clowes cut the controversy short by remarking that the time of the prayer meeting was too precious to be thus wasted. Invited to commence the meeting, he announced a hymn, then fell on his knees in front of the pulpit and began his prayer with the petition: "Lord, bind the devil," which he repeated more than twenty times. The "Amens" thundered from every side and finally ended in a shout of "Glory." Soon the people were praying in every part of the room, and this ended the attempt to make Clowes and his associates conform to conventional regulations in their devotions.

Very early in his religious life Clowes revealed the possession of exceptional gifts of public speech. That the Methodist authorities were so slow in recognising this and giving him the status of a local preacher is a little remarkable. Some of his early attempts at exhortation were made in the company of the local preachers, whom he accompanied to their appointments. On these occasions he would give out a hymn, offer prayer, and deliver a brief

exhortation. Then there was an occasion at the Kidsgrove class meeting when his marvellous power seems to have flashed out with extraordinary results. On this occasion a number of half-drunken colliers had invaded the place, and perceiving that they were not saints he had to deal with, Clowes changed his subject and poured upon them a red-hot exhortation. A strange terror seized the intruders, and they rushed from the room, fearing they should "fall into hell if they remained." One of them was not able to get out, but fell like an ox smitten in the shambles, and remained under the seat till the close. Several persons were converted that night, and a mighty shout of victory went through the place. From the Rev. Robert Miller, one of the ministers of the Burslem circuit, Clowes received valuable suggestions in regard to religious exercises, which were of considerable help afterwards. Later we find him taking appointments for the local preachers who held their Theological Class in his house, and making several preaching excursions into Cheshire. He had now begun to preach sermons based on a text, instead of delivering mere exhortations. The Superintendent minister directed him to preach a Trial Sermon at Tunstall, and he was forthwith made a regular local preacher.

While in Cheshire Clowes heard of an eccentric but powerful local preacher, James Crawfoot by name, who dwelt in retirement amid the glades of Delamere Forest. The singular effects produced by

this man's preaching were by some ascribed to the possession of miraculous power; by others, to the exercise of the black arts. The interest of both Bourne and Clowes was so awakened that they arranged to visit Crawfoot in company, and together journeyed to Delamere. Now James Crawfoot was a mystic and wonderfully versed in the "mysteries of faith." His knowledge and insight into the councils of the Eternal, and his vivid realisation of the spiritual world, invested his prayers with an intimacy with the Almighty which gave the impression to those listening to his wonderful voice as he prayed that he actually saw the Lord with bodily eyes. Hugh Bourne and William Clowes both sat at the feet of this man and owned him master in the deep things of God. Ultimately Hugh Bourne and his brother James paid the "Old Man of the Forest" ten shillings a week as a travelling evangelist, and he thus became the first "travelling preacher" of the Primitive Methodist Church.

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Germ of the First English Camp Meeting	56
How the Germ was Quickened by Lorenzo Dow	56
Lorenzo Dow's Early Career	56
Hugh Bourne's Purpose in Holding a Camp Meeting	58
The Character of the Wakes	58
Decision to Hold a Camp Meeting on Mow Cop.	59
Hugh Bourne's Democratic Idea of a Camp Meeting	60
Thomas Cotton and the Date of First Camp Meeting	60
How the News of a Camp Meeting Spread	61
The Romance of the Camp Meeting	62
How they came to Mow Cop	62
The First Camp Meeting	62
Hugh Bourne and William Clowes' Part in First Camp Meeting	65
Leading Figures at the Camp Meeting	65
Opposition to Second Camp Meeting	65
Hugh Bourne Licenses the Ground	65
What the Two First Camp Meetings Cost Bourne	65
Second Camp Meeting	67
Important Results of Second Camp Meeting	69
Opposition of the Wesleyan Authorities	69
The Norton Camp Meeting	69
Paul Johnson's Timely Arrival	70
The Great Camp Meetings of the Early Days	71
George Borrow Present at a Camp Meeting	72

CHAPTER IV.

OF ITS CAMP MEETINGS.

WE have now seen the development of two centres of primitive fire, in which a religious life of a singularly ardent and explosive type was fostered, chiefly by two men, Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, the one in the immediate neighbourhood of Mow Cop and the other more particularly at Tunstall. The two men have made acquaintance, and each found in the other something of a kindred spirit. They have also both become in some sense disciples of James Crawfoot. Widely different in temperament and gifts, they were at one in their passionate zeal for the salvation of their fellows. We have now to consider the development of a distinctive mode of evangelism which was to give these two centres of religious propaganda an individuality of a still more pronounced kind, and ultimately fuse them into a new religious community.

This particular mode of evangelism was the Camp Meeting. A good deal of romance has gathered

round its origin, so far as this country is concerned. Daniel Shubotham it was who first mooted the idea of a prolonged religious service on Mow Cop. Hugh Bourne was resolute in limiting the duration of the prayer meetings at Harriseahead, so that they might not become a reproach or unfit those taking part in them for the arduous employment of the next day. This did not always suit the ardent souls of these young converts, and once, when some annoyance was being expressed at the close of a meeting, Daniel sought to soothe them with the promise: "You shall have a meeting upon Mow some Sunday, and have a whole day's praying, and then you'll be satisfied." This was the germ of the first English Camp Meeting.

The quickening of that germ into activity came some time later from one of those seemingly accidental causes which only partially veil the workings of Divine Providence. A "Comet in the religious world," in the course of a sudden and apparently erratic movement, found his way from America to Harriseahead and Burslem, and communicated to the quiescent Camp Meeting germ the impulse necessary to its quickening into activity. Lorenzo Dow is a romance in himself. He was eccentric to the last degree. He could not move in accustomed orbits. Converted when fifteen, he began praying and exhorting in public two years later. It is said that no man ever triumphed over so many obstacles. At eighteen he attended some

appointments with several circuit preachers, but they all discouraged his attempts. Three months were spent on a Rhode Island circuit, but the Quarterly Meeting discharged him. Proposed for the ministry at the Conference of 1797, he was rejected and sent home. But the inner call was so strong that he went about preaching from ten to fifteen times a week, and in eight months travelled over 8,000 miles, chiefly where the population was spiritually destitute.

He was again proposed at the Conference of 1798, and his case was debated for three hours, but the stories of his strange eccentricities were fatal, and he was again declined. As a sort of compromise, he was left at the disposal of the presiding elder, and received an appointment. Here he was known as "Crazy Dow." The next year he was sent to carve out a new circuit in Lower Canada, the first regular missionary in that region, and the following year reported a membership of 274. But though blameless, devoted, aflame with holy zeal, he could never be a good Methodist. Method was not in his line, and he could only do good in a fashion of his own. The next year, in obedience to one of his strange impulses, he took ship for Ireland, believing the Lord had a work for him to do there.

It was this man whom "no Conference or Bishop could hold or bind," with a record of labours and privations almost without parallel, whom "many thought more than half madman and the rest knave,

while others beheld in him more than half prophet and the latest apostle and discerner of spirits, and who, hence, was at once reviled and praised, shunned and followed, persecuted and kindly treated, that was the means under God of quickening into activity the germ of the Camp Meeting originated by Daniel Shubotham some years before." Thrice over did Lorenzo Dow flash from America to England and Ireland and back again, and it was on one of these comet-like appearances that he made a flying visit to the neighbourhood of Mow Cop. Hugh Bourne heard him several times, and the stories narrated of the American Camp Meetings made a deep impression on the mind of one who had read and thought much about them. Two books on the subject, purchased from Dow, convinced Hugh Bourne that Camp Meetings ought to be employed in England for the saving of the masses. If large numbers were thus converted in America, why not in this country? And to get men converted was the passion of Hugh Bourne's life.

But it was not merely the longing to arrest and save men that influenced Hugh Bourne in this desire for a Camp Meeting; he wished to use it as a means of counteracting a particular evil that threatened to injure the good work already being done. He dreaded the effect of the approaching wakes upon the work of God. These wakes, once held as religious festivals in the churchyards as anniversaries of the dedication of churches, had by

this time degenerated into occasions of revelry and debauchery, in which not only men, but women, and young people of both sexes, abandoned all restraint and gave themselves up to the vilest abominations. Drinking, pugilism, dog-fighting, cock-fighting, bull-baiting, were the chief amusements, and to get helplessly drunk was often the deliberate object of those who took part in the revels.

It is not difficult to imagine how the godly regarded these occasions, and how keen must have been the anxiety of men like Bourne and Shubotham to find some counter attraction against this pandemonium. In the estimation of the former the Camp Meeting was the very thing. It would serve at once for defence and aggression. Accordingly, it was arranged that when the August wakes at Norton-on-the-Moors came round, a Camp Meeting should be held in that neighbourhood.

It was in the spring of 1807 that Lorenzo Dow visited Staffordshire, and to men whose hearts were on fire with a passionate desire to save their fellows, and whose imaginations had been stirred by the stories of Pentecostal times at American Camp Meetings, it seemed a long time to wait till August for this new and inspiring campaign against the enemy. Hence it was decided to hold a Camp Meeting on Mow Cop on May 31st. This was to be the fulfilment of Daniel Shubotham's promise of a whole day's praying on Mow.

In the interval Hugh Bourne has brooded to purpose, and now the kind of meeting that this ought to be has taken definite shape in his mind. It is not to be a field preaching, such as obtained in the days of Wesley, in which the service was conducted throughout by one man, but more democratic in its character, after the style of the American Camp Meeting, where many might preach and more pray. One definite object was to be kept in view throughout, the bringing home to men a sense of personal sin and leading them to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

The Cheshire side of Mow Cop was the spot chosen for this new departure, the consequences of which none then foresaw; for it was on this same spot that one hundred years afterwards the great Centenary Camp Meeting was to be held, at which men assembled from all parts of England in numbers estimated at from seventy to one hundred thousand. How little the members of that Harriseahead class meeting, before whom Hugh Bourne laid his plans for the Norton Camp Meeting, dreamed of the outcome of their seemingly haphazard discussion. They were quite agreeable to their leader's proposals, but their thoughts were of that day's praying on Mow which they had been promised six years before. "That's the Camp Meeting," exclaims Daniel Shubotham, as he scans the plan for the quarter, and his eye lights on the name of Thomas Cotton on May 31st. The significance of Thomas

Cotton being planned on May 31st lay in the fact that he was one of themselves, and in transferring the services for the day to Mow Cop, they would not be interfering with the work of a stranger.

Immediately this momentous decision was taken, the little company fell on their knees to ask the divine blessing on the enterprise. Norton was not forgotten in these prayers, but Mow Cap was the great object of desire. The news of this projected gathering flew through the country, "as if it had gone on the wings of angels." In the pottery district the news went from house to house and from village to village. The tidings reached Macclesfield, and the Independent Methodists said: "We must go." In Stockport, twenty miles distant, the earnest souls heard the news and resolved to be present. Onward swept the news to Warrington, forty miles away, and the Quaker Methodists resolved that a service so novel and promising should not be held without them.

The site chosen for this meeting was calculated to appeal to the imagination of the people. "The bleak and frowning summit" of Mow Cop, 1,100 feet above sea level, is the landmark of the country for miles around. It is a part of the group of hills sometimes called the Cheshire Highlands, and is the highest point of the south-westernmost ridge of the Pennine range. The name was formerly spelt Mole and Mael, which signifies bald, while Cop, signifying peak, is the same as the South

African kopje. There was romance in the very idea of a Camp Meeting, of which the multitudes had the very vaguest idea, held on Mow. Even the most religious felt the spell of the thing, and it is not surprising that men's thoughts for scores of miles round were for weeks turned towards Mow Cop, little dreaming that one hundred years later the thoughts of countless thousands would turn to it as a sort of Mecca. Some of the people travelled all night to be there by sunrise, as multitudes were to travel vastly greater distances and by far swifter means of locomotion a century later. For not on foot, or in carts and waggons, and the old-fashioned farmer's shandry, were they to travel to distant Mow at the Centenary celebrations, but by the palatial railway carriage of modern civilisation, and at a speed of which the wildest imagination had never dreamed in these far-off days.

That 31st of May, 1807, dawned unpromisingly; so much so, that many concluded that no Camp Meeting would be held. At Harriseahead it was understood the meeting would not be held should the weather prove unfavourable, and as some rain fell in the early morning, Hugh Bourne and his associates did not arrive on the scene till late. When Clowes reached the spot at six o'clock the service had already commenced. The clouds had by this time dispersed, and the promise of a fine day thrilled the hearts of the assembled thousands.

Captain Edward Anderson, from Kilham, near Driffield, erected a "sort of a flag" as a guide to the spot. So romantic a person must not be thus dismissed as a mere name. He had been a shepherd-lad, a sailor, a rhymster, a Methodist, an anti-slavery advocate, and a temperance reformer. He had been shipwrecked, captured by French privateers and in the hands of the press-gang; but in Liverpool he had been arrested and soundly converted at a Methodist meeting, and was now among the foremost in promoting the weal of his fellows.

He, with two others, seem to have carried on the meeting at first, and Peter Bradburn preached. At that early hour the wind was cold, but a grove of fir trees served as shelter, and as the crowd grew it became necessary to erect another stand some distance away under the shelter of a stone wall, the said stands being mere heaps of stones to serve as a slight elevation for the preacher. Very early the power of God became manifest at the meeting. Between the two stands Hugh Bourne came across a company praying with a man in distress. He could not get near, but his love and joy were beyond description. Before he got back to the first stand he found another company praying with mourners, and at the same instant he heard from the group he had just left the shout of joy which told that the penitent had been set at liberty.

By noon a third stand was found necessary, and mounting this after the first preaching, Hugh Bourne

surveyed the scene. "The people were nearly all under my eye, and I had not conceived that such a multitude was present. Thousands hearing with an attention as solemn as death, presented a scene of the most sublime and awfully pleasing grandeur that my eyes ever beheld. The preachers seemed to be fired with an uncommon zeal, and an extraordinary unction attended their word, while tears were flowing and sinners trembling on every side." Later a fourth stand was erected, and, as Hugh Bourne puts it, "the work became general. Four preachers were preaching with all their might; here and there a company would be gathered round some penitent seeking salvation. Throughout the vast assembly the Lord was present to heal, and many were savingly converted."

The informality of the meeting was one of its striking features. It had nothing conventional about it. Although no meeting quite like it had been held in England, or perhaps even in the world, there seems to have been no hesitancy as to what should be done next. Every man did that which was right in his own eyes, and it was right. Sermon, exhortation, testimony, prayer and singing followed in rapid succession. There was constant variety in the proceedings and in the speakers. Like a magnet, Mow Cop had drawn from all the country round the men of spiritual fervour and evangelistic gifts, and hour after hour the work went on without intermission.

Hugh Bourne does not seem to have preached. He was not then, or indeed ever, a regular local preacher among the Wesleyans. But he was the organising spirit of the day, superintending, inspiring, advising everywhere. And we may be sure he took a large share in the praying exercises, and in dealing with the penitents. William Clowes was not yet a local preacher either, but had for some time been giving exhortations. On this occasion he began with an account of his religious experience, and then followed with an exhortation which was accompanied with marvellous unction and power.

Of the other preachers of the day, mention has already been made of Captain Anderson, who told the story of his life in verse, mingled with exhortation. An Irish lawyer, one of Lorenzo Dow's converts, gave thrilling accounts of the Irish rebellion, with vivid descriptions of the scenes of the battlefield. Eleazer Hathorn, another of Lorenzo Dow's converts, was an ex-officer of the British army, who had lost a limb in Africa, and was now known as "the wooden-legged preacher." This man, once a Deist, had had adventures in various parts of the world, and spoke largely of his own life. Peter Phillips, of Warrington, had travelled through the night by spring cart along the Cheshire lanes of the Vale Royal of England so as to be on Mow Cop by six o'clock next morning. Peter Bradburn, the first speaker of the day, was

a young local preacher from Macclesfield. Joseph Marsh, afterwards a Wesleyan minister, counted his having spoken at this famous Camp Meeting one of the honours of his life. Dr. Paul Johnson, of Dublin, a personal friend of Lorenzo Dow, if somewhat Quakerish in his style of speech, would be none the less acceptable to some there who owed much to the people called Friends. So with prayer, praise, preaching, testimony, the cries of the penitent, and the shouts of deliverance, the day wore on. By four o'clock the people began to disperse, and at six only one preaching stand was required. It is characteristic that Hugh Bourne records how at seven a work "broke out" among the children. At eight o'clock the proceedings came to an end. "At the termination of this memorable day," Clowes records, "I felt excessively exhausted, as I had laboured from the commencement of the meeting in the morning till eight o'clock in the evening with little cessation; but the glory that filled my soul on that day far exceeds my powers of description." Of those who were present, only one man, James Bourne, the brother of Hugh, survived to attend the Jubilee Camp Meeting on the same spot.

Here endeth the first British Camp Meeting. But it was not to be the last. The Camp Meeting was destined to become one of the distinctive features of a great religious community. North and south, and east and west, it was to be a

successful method of evangelism, and in well-established centres it was to persist through the next century as an annual institution of often effective service, and stirring the hearts of men with inspiring memories of the great day on Mow Hill.

The position of Hugh Bourne in the first Camp Meeting is further indicated by the fact that at the close he announced that a second would be held on the same spot. This was to be held at the time of the Potteries' wakes. It soon became known that a deistic master potter, named Stephenson, proposed to crush the Camp Meetings by invoking the Conventicle Act against them. With characteristic decision Hugh Bourne took the precaution of hiring ground on the Staffordshire side of Mow, and then securing a license. But the license could only be granted to a building, so at his own expense he erected a wooden building, thus bringing the thing within the meaning of the Act. For the license he travelled on foot all the way to Lichfield, and then got himself licensed as a Dissenting minister at the Stafford Quarter Sessions. A number of tents were also erected, provisions laid in, and crockery provided, and in the cost of these last William Clowes shared. Altogether the first and second Camp Meetings cost Hugh Bourne £100. It was on Saturday evening, July 18th, 1807, that this second Camp Meeting began, and it continued till the following Tuesday evening. People came

from places as distant as Macclesfield, Warrington, Stockport, and Knutsford.

Breathing out threatenings, the deistic master potter appeared upon the scene on horseback, demanding to see the licenses. Hugh Bourne, as the person in charge, was sent for. He had not donned his Sunday garments, having much labour to perform, and looked like neither a Dissenting minister nor a generalissimo of forces. Discovering that he was checkmated, the would-be disturber rode off, but was immediately seized with terror, catching sight, probably, of the warning board against disturbers of a lawful assembly, and returned in a very subdued mood, disposed to argue from the Scriptures as a common standard of authority, and finally taking his leave with a "God bless you," to which the people heartily responded with a "God bless him." And so the raging lion departed, mild as a lamb.

The Saturday evening was spent in prayer, and on Sunday morning the power of God was present to heal. A gracious unction rested on the meeting, and to quote the words of Hugh Bourne: "Ere long the converting work broke out, and the praying with mourners went on with power, and I regretted it being stopped for breakfast; but it soon broke out again." Forty souls were converted before the close of the day, and twenty more on the Monday. The attendance waned on the Tuesday, and in the evening of that day the second Camp

Meeting on Mow Hill came to a close. Its effect was very marked in neutralising the evil influence of the wakes, and in promoting religion and morality. Scarcely less important, however, was its effect in establishing, in the estimation of the public generally, the legality of such meetings. Since a determined opponent like Mr. Stephenson had been completely foiled, it seemed clear that meetings of the kind might be attended without risk of legal interference.

The Camp Meeting Methodists, however, were not by any means done with opposition. As we shall find when we come to deal with the exodus of Primitive Methodism, not the law of the State, but the law of the Church was invoked against this form of religious propaganda. Here it will suffice to say that the Norton Camp Meeting, which was really the first one decided upon, was held on August 23rd, 1807, and, owing to the action of the Wesleyan Methodist authorities and the Conference, the meeting assembled to some extent under a cloud. Amidst many waverers, Hugh Bourne held steadily to his conviction that Camp Meetings were of God, and after some hesitancy his brother James decided to stand by him. The necessary legal formalities as to licensing the ground were observed, tents erected, and the meetings began on the Saturday night with a course of prayer. Hugh Bourne slept in one of the tents, and the Camp Meeting, which was destined to have far-reaching consequences, began early on the Sunday morning. The weather

was occasionally unfavourable, and it was scarcely expected that there would be a large attendance, but a great multitude came together. The labourers were so few that dismay was beginning to fill their hearts, when an unexpected diversion took place in their favour. There arrived upon the scene Lorenzo Dow's friend, Dr. Paul Johnson, the Dublin physician, who at once made his way to the centre of the meeting. Having been present at Mow Cop, and laboured with Dow in the course of his revival tours in Lancashire and Cheshire, he was recognised by some present and asked to speak. He possessed gifts of speech that quickly gained the ear of the people, and they were soon captivated with him. To begin with, they could all hear him: he possessed a voice so powerful and resonant that it "filled the field," an invaluable asset to the out-door preacher. Then he had something to say and knew how to say it, so that throughout the meetings, which extended over Monday and Tuesday, he was the chief speaker. His advent changed the whole aspect of the gathering; doubt and depression gave place to hope and confidence, and from that hour the Camp Meeting seemed to be established of God as a powerful means of advancing the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Space will not permit any detailed account of the many Camp Meetings that followed. They played a great part in the spread of Primitive Methodism throughout the land. Their novelty,

their direct appeal, their marvellous spiritual power, served to attract and arrest multitudes. Memories of the early days are inextricably woven round such Camp Meetings as the Wrekin, held in 1808, where for four hours "great liberty" was experienced in preaching and praying; Nottingham Forest, which on Whit Sunday, 1816, with a company of 12,000, inaugurated a movement destined to sweep the Midlands; Priesthill, a Camp Meeting love feast; Buckminster, near Grantham, which drew John Wedgwood from prison; Woodhouse Eaves, in Charnwood Forest, which was attended by such multitudes that the village wells were drunk dry, and the food supply gave out, while the spiritual harvest of the day gave three hundred adherents to Loughborough alone; Hinckley, in 1818, where the meeting was held by lantern-light, so that the intense conviction and passionate earnestness of the preachers was heightened in their effect by the weird and solemn scene, until a torrent of expostulation, warning, entreaty, and appeal poured forth like a tempest upon the spell-bound multitude, a wave of indescribable emotion swept over them, and cries for mercy were heard on every hand; Witney, Oxfordshire, in 1825, when the roughs invaded the Camp ground and upset one of the waggons used as preaching stand—a strange, exciting, turbulent day, yet one in which the power of God was present to heal, and at one point fifteen persons were crying for mercy; Round Hill, near

Leicester, where John Benton thundered with such tremendous effect on "the great day of His wrath is come," that men verily believed the day of judgment had dawned, and fled from the spot, while others fell upon each other in heaps, the preacher so injuring his vocal chords in trying to arrest the panic that for long he lost the use of his voice—a great and wonderful, if somewhat awe-inspiring, and disastrous day; Oldham, in 1822, where 14,000 people were present, and a season of extraordinary Pentecostal power was experienced; Pickering, in 1821, where a scene of wonderful natural beauty furnished the setting for a sight of infinite moral significance—"five large companies wrestling with God in a pleasant valley, and pleading for precious souls, and ere the day closed scores were converted; Waterloo, a decisive spiritual engagement which "wonderfully opened up the way into this part of Cheshire and the borders of Wales," and at which Thomas Bateman found opportunity for the exercise of his skilful generalship by rebuking a line of gay young sparks on horse-back, whose purpose was to disturb the meeting, one of whom, thirty years afterwards, confessed to having been arrested that day in his career of folly; East Tuddenham, in 1831, described by Robert Key as the most powerful meeting he ever witnessed, and where more than fifty persons were "set at liberty."

In "Lavengro" George Borrow gives a striking

description of a Camp Meeting he attended, which must have been one of our own of the early days. One of the preachers, he tells us, was "dressed in sober-coloured habiliments of black or brown, cut in a plain and rather uncouth fashion, and partially white with dust, and with the hair smoothed down as by the application of the hand." The speaking and singing made a deep impression on his mind, and in an eloquent passage he recalls some of the most splendid religious ceremonies he had ever attended in Italy and Russia, as making his ears to tingle with the memory of what he heard at this remarkable meeting. Long afterwards he again saw the preacher who had specially impressed him on that occasion, and leaning over the shoulder of his horse as he galloped away, he exclaimed: "Would that my life had been like his—even like that man's . . . one of those men—and thank God their number is not few—who animated by the spirit of Christ, amidst much poverty, and, alas, much contempt, persist in carrying the light of the Gospel amidst the dark parishes of what, but for their instrumentality, would scarcely be Christian England."

CONTENTS.

	Page
Importance of Norton Camp Meeting	75
Hugh Bourne Firm for Camp Meetings	76
Wesleyan Conference Decides Against Camp Meetings	76
Hugh Bourne Expelled by Wesleyans	78
No Idea of Creating Divisions	79
Record of a Day's Toil by Hugh Bourne	80
Hugh Bourne gives up His Occupation	80
Hugh Bourne's Labours and Journeys	81
The Camp Meeting the Centre of the Work	81
Intimacy of Bourne and Clowes	82
Haymaking and Greek	83
James Crawfoot Employed as a Travelling Preacher	83
Clowes Bows to the Conference Decision	84
James Crawfoot's Advice to Clowes	85
William Clowes Expelled	86
Primitive Methodism not a Secession	87
Mrs. Dunnell and Norton Camp Meeting	88
Services in Joseph Smith's Kitchen	89
Clowes Employed as an Evangelist	90
Expulsion of James Steele	90
Kitchen Exchanged for Warehouse	91
A Chapel Built	92
Stanley Class	92
A New Denomination	93
Bourne and Crawfoot Visit London	94
First Class Tickets	95
Name Primitive Methodist Taken	97

CHAPTER V.

OF ITS EXODUS.

WHILE in some respects Mow Cop is the most important Camp Meeting in our history, in others, that at Norton must have the pre-eminence. It was the parting of the ways, and those who took part in it did so knowing that thereby they took their ecclesiastical lives in their hands. As we have seen, it was the first Camp Meeting arranged for, but the third in order of time. The Wesleyan authorities of the Burslem circuit, while acquiescing in the first as a thing not likely to be repeated, set themselves resolutely in opposition to the second. The pamphlet Hugh Bourne circulated, giving an account of the first Camp Meeting, also announced a second and third. Forthwith the ministers of the Burslem and Macclesfield circuits published handbills in opposition to Camp Meetings. Next came a bill announcing that no camp meeting would be held. Now it was a war of handbills. A handbill, signed by H. and

J. Bourne, D. Shubotham, M. Bayley and T. Cotton intimated that the camp meetings as arranged would be held.

Hugh Bourne was at the heart of this storm centre, and it may be safely assumed that if he had wavered the whole movement would have collapsed. But he stood firm, though it is not to be imagined that when he found such serious official opposition was to be encountered, and that some of his supporters, like Daniel Shubotham, had deserted him, his equanimity was quite undisturbed. As we have seen, the second Camp Meeting on Mow Cop was held, and with very satisfactory results.

But before the time for the Norton Camp Meeting arrived, the Wesleyan Conference, held that year at Liverpool, passed a resolution against Camp Meetings. It was evidently intended that the movement should be nipped in the bud, as the fateful record shows.

Q.—"What is the judgment of the Conference concerning what are called Camp Meetings?"

A.—"It is our judgment that, even supposing such meetings to be allowable in America, they are highly improper in England, and likely to be productive of considerable mischief; and we disclaim all connection with them."

On his return from Conference, the superintendent of the Burslem circuit called together the local preachers and warned them of the consequences of violating the rule by attending the Norton or any

similar meeting. As we have seen, Hugh Bourne did attend the meeting. The defection of many of his supporters, who under official pressure were induced to hold aloof, tried him ; but nothing could shake his conviction that this thing was of God, and that at all costs he must go forward. After the Camp Meeting he continued his evangelistic work with greater vigour than ever ; missioned Laskedge, and raised up a society which was taken over by the Wesleyans and supplied with fortnightly preaching, he himself taking the alternate week. Tean, a village twenty miles away, Kingsley, Farley, Ramsor and Wootton in Staffordshire were similarly missioned, and the societies placed under the care of the Wesleyan authorities.

But against all these labours and successes was to be set the fact that Hugh Bourne continued to organise and hold Camp Meetings : at the Wrekin, at Buglawton, Wootton and Mow. At the last named it is noteworthy that he read aloud to the people during the dinner hour to keep their minds engaged on spiritual things. On the 23rd June, 1808, returning from a visit to Delamere Forest, as he communed with God on the way, the impression struck him forcibly that he would shortly be expelled from the Methodist Society. He had never heard a hint of such a thing, and the thought gave him much distress. He had toiled incessantly, and spent scores and scores of pounds for the Society, thereby adding hundreds to its membership.

He strove to put the thought away, but failed ; and so distressed was he, that he found it difficult to walk the road. Suddenly he gave it up, to use his own words, by which, presumably, he means that he left the whole thing in the hands of God, and instantly was filled with unspeakable joy.

On reaching home, he was informed that it was rumoured he was to be put out of the Society. Four days later, the Quarterly Meeting of the Burslem circuit formally expelled him. He was never given any opportunity of defending himself, although as a chapel trustee he was entitled to a hearing ; nor was he officially informed why he had been expelled. On the authority of William Clowes, who was present at the Quarterly Meeting, the charge preferred was for not attending class, which surely cannot be regarded other than as a flimsy pretext. The slightest examination would have revealed the fact that he was never absent when within reach of the meeting. The real reason was frankly stated by the superintendent preacher when Hugh Bourne asked him for an explanation of the matter. It was "for setting up other than the ordinary worship" ; while the circuit steward, who alone seems to have said anything on his behalf, stated that he believed the expulsion was on account of attending a Camp Meeting at Mow. It is clear that the head and front of his offending was his disregard of the Camp Meeting resolution of the Conference.

Prepared of God as he believed he had been for this blow, he received it in meekness and quietness of spirit, and continued his evangelistic labours, doing his best to persuade his converts to join the Methodist Societies. To form a party or create division was the furthest thing from his thought. "Ten thousands of the gold of Ophir," he declares, would not have induced him to do anything of the kind. The conversion of souls was all he cared for, and so he continued to labour for this end with singleness of mind. At Camp Meetings Thomas Cotton rendered great service, and as he was a poor man with a large family, James and Hugh Bourne paid his wages for any loss of time incurred in this way. Shortly afterwards he too was expelled from the Methodists, his offence being that he preached at Camp Meetings.

The period immediately after Hugh Bourne's expulsion from the Methodist Society is peculiarly interesting. Here was a man suddenly cut adrift from his ecclesiastical moorings. What was he to do? He was not a great preacher, and so could not command the following which the gifts of oratory and eloquence might have secured. Fortunately he did not seek a following. He had no idea of drawing men after himself or of creating a new religious organisation. The spirit of self had been exorcised from his nature by the spirit of love. He had one passion,—to save men, to rescue the perishing multitudes around him.

With what singleness of aim and tenacity of purpose he pursued this great object may be gathered from the record of a single day's toil. He had arranged to meet his brother at Tean, but started off in the morning for Wootton to announce that a service would be held there at half-past two. He began the day footsore, and on reaching Wootton learned to his dismay that Tean was nine or ten miles distant. He was on a strange road, and now "very footsore"; but he tells us that God gave him strength, and he "forced his way," arriving at Tean before his brother announced the text. James was on horseback, and after the service the two went on to Wootton, "running and riding by turns." The meeting in the afternoon was extraordinary, and as the result, "the cause took root, and has continued to this day." From Wootton they journeyed home, a distance of eighteen miles. The horse had travelled forty-five miles. Hugh Bourne records that this was one of the hardest days of labour he ever underwent; and if he had not had the horse he could not have got home, but would have fainted on the road through excessive fatigue. There was, however, the great compensation, for he adds: "The Lord greatly owned that day's labour."

A severe trial now befell this remarkable man. He received an admonition from heaven to abandon his occupation, and, trusting God for food and raiment, to give himself wholly up to the work of the ministry. He did his utmost to avoid this

course, but became convinced that if he persisted in opposition to the Divine will he should die. At length he yielded, and received a peculiar blessing from God, a blessing he could never forget. For some time he had been devoting all his earnings to the spread of the Gospel, paying labourers for time and service, and publishing tracts, books, and handbills for Camp Meetings.

The story of Hugh Bourne's toils during the next year or two cannot be told here. He was in labours more abundant, and we often find him foot sore. It is open to question whether any man ever walked so many miles in the prosecution of Christian work as he. To the end of his life he was unwilling to spend money on conveyances. Once, after a journey of thirty miles to preach anniversary services, he was asked the amount of his expenses. "Twopence half-penny," was the reply. The man repeated his question, thinking he had not heard aright. Sharply came the answer: "Twopence half-penny, I told you; cannot you believe me? I can give you a bill if you like. A pennyworth of bread, a pennyworth of cheese, and a half-pennyworth of treacle-beer." On another occasion he records that he was footsore and thought it cheapest to take the coach. Still he walked twenty miles later in the day, so that one wonders how the feet, so sore in the morning, fared before night.

The centre of everything during these years of transition was the Camp Meeting. Nothing to the

very close of his life was so dear to Hugh Bourne as this. When Colin Campbell McKechnie met him in the North during his later days he was full of the idea that the day of Pentecost was a great Camp Meeting. And in 1808 he is constantly organising these meetings, rejoicing in their success, and recording how that in spite of its being the rainy season or the month of October, the Lord gave them a fine day. Speaking of a Camp Meeting at Ramsor he says : " My friend, William Clowes, was present." The meeting was so successful that a second was held as late as October 9th, at which William Clowes " first began to preach, and the people encouraged him to go on." By this is meant, that instead of a brief exhortation, a regular sermon, based on a text, was delivered.

The growing intimacy and co-operation of these two men marks a new stage in the development of events. On December 31st we find them travelling together to Delamere Forest, for the purpose of Christian fellowship with the old mystic James Crawfoot. Here they attended a Watch Night and prayed the old year out. It had been a wonderful year for Hugh Bourne, eventful, toilsome, joyful, yet trying, not to say adventurous. He had been expelled from the Church, had given up his worldly calling that he might devote himself fully to the ministry of the word, organised great and novel assemblies for the preaching of the Gospel, and on one occasion had himself preached a sermon "a mile

and a half long," inasmuch as passing along a lane full of people he preached all the way as he went. Thus early he began the procession services, which afterwards became such a feature of the Denomination he helped to found.

Through the year 1809 we find him continuing his labours in various parts of the country. That he might not be chargeable to the friends among whom he laboured, he frequently worked with his own hands, and expended considerable sums in the support of other labourers. He managed to combine haymaking with the study of Greek, and prayer with the setting up of corn; often weak in body yet toiling on with the tenacity born of a great passion and an indomitable will.

Towards the latter part of the year we find him employing James Crawfoot as a salaried travelling preacher, partly at the suggestion of William Clowes. The old man was in straitened circumstances, and the people all round as sheep without a shepherd. Having "a little money beforehand," Hugh Bourne felt called upon to spend some of it in thus furthering the cause so dear to his heart. From November till Lady-day Crawfoot was to labour at ten shillings a week, half of which James Bourne, when he learned of the arrangement, undertook to pay. The commission of this first travelling preacher was simplicity itself. He was "to labour to get souls converted, and try to get them into some Christian church." His was a roving com-

mission, limited only by the stipulation that if Hugh Bourne wished it, one part of his time was to be spent in Cheshire and Lancashire, and another in Staffordshire. Any money he received was to go towards the payment of his salary. Occasionally he was assisted by the brothers Bourne or William Clowes, and all testify to his great success. By his instrumentality many classes were raised and handed over to the Methodists or other religious bodies. Not the least valuable service rendered by the missionary was to Bourne and Clowes, whose success in after years was in no small measure due to the inspiration and instruction received from this remarkable man.

Having seen Hugh Bourne fully launched on the work which was destined ultimately to develop into a new Denomination, it is time we turned to William Clowes, who became the leader of the other stream which later was to merge with that of Hugh Bourne and form the Primitive Methodist Connexion. But that stream was to flow a little longer in the recognised Methodist channels. For the time William Clowes bowed to the decision of the Conference, and after the second Camp at Mow Cop attended no more for fifteen months. Hence while Bourne was ecclesiastically hanged, Clowes was promoted. Having preached his trial sermon, he was advanced to the status of a regular local preacher, and until 1810 seems to have been amenable to discipline. He was in hearty sympathy

with the Camp Meeting movement, but for a time his respect for the authority of the Methodist Church, while it did not prevent his advocacy and defence of these meetings, served to keep him away from them. The path of duty did not seem clear, and it was a time of hesitancy and perplexity. In a very real sense Clowes was to become a path-finder, but not in all respects of the originality and audacity of Hugh Bourne. Hence he hesitated where the latter marched straight forward.

Resuming attendance at Camp Meetings it soon became evident that he would have to make his choice between them and the Methodist Society. He was in a strait betwixt two, and in this state of mind appealed for guidance to Hugh Bourne and James Crawfoot. It might be supposed that the former, having been harshly treated by the authorities, would be disposed to favour a course that might place them in a difficulty, and compel them either to stultify themselves or adopt an unpopular course. For with his popularity, the expulsion of William Clowes would be a much more risky proceeding than in the case of Hugh Bourne. Though quite clear as to his own duty, however, Hugh Bourne hesitated in the case of Clowes, and "thought it would be better not to attend the forthcoming Camp Meeting at Ramsor." The "old man of the forest" delivered his verdict somewhat after the manner of an oracle. Said he: "'Tis better to obey God than man."

This seems to have decided Clowes, and he accompanied his friends to the Camp Meeting. This was on the 3rd June, 1810. Apparently it was decisive, for at the Quarterly Meeting of that month his name was removed from the plan. When the tickets were renewed the following September, as leader of the class William Clowes handed the minister, Mr. Aikenhead, the class paper to call over the names as usual. In doing so the minister omitted that of the leader. At a leaders' meeting the next night Clowes asked the minister why his ticket had been withheld and his name left off the plan. He was told that this had been done owing to his attendance at Camp Meetings, contrary to Methodist discipline, and that he could not be either a preacher or leader unless he promised to attend no more Camp Meetings. This he declared he could not conscientiously do, for God had greatly blessed him at these meetings, which were calculated for great usefulness. Sentence was then pronounced. "I was then informed that I was no longer with them; the matter was settled." Forthwith he delivered up his class papers and became unchurched.

When this became known, consternation prevailed throughout the neighbourhood. It is certain that if at this time Clowes had sought to place himself at the head of a movement for secession, the consequences to the Methodist Society would have been disastrous. But nothing could have been

further from his thoughts. He showed no resentment, but with meekness and submission accepted the sentence of excommunication. It was a wrench, but it set him free for wider service. He quaintly describes himself as :

> "Of my Eden dispossessed,
> The world was all before me where to choose
> My place of rest, and Providence my guide."

It was well for the future of Primitive Methodism that he acted thus. If it has been our glory, it was at the outset also our salvation, that we did not originate in a secession. The exodus was not voluntary ; the leaders of the future Denomination were thrust out, and they began anew, off the ground as it were, and practically unfettered by ecclesiastical prepossessions. There was this further advantage, that those who formed the new religious community were for the most part newly converted and free to take the new design which was, so to speak, to be impressed upon them.

But though Clowes resolutely refrained from anything calculated to create a split in the Methodist Society, he could not hinder several who were specially attached to him, and who owed him everything so far as their religious life was concerned, from refusing to be separated from him in spiritual fellowship and service. Clowes besought them to choose other leaders and to abide with the Methodists, but in vain. Curiously enough, a place of meeting had already been provided. For more

than two years preaching services had been held in the kitchen of Mr. Joseph Smith, an eccentric old gentleman owning considerable property in Tunstall, and who vainly attempted to regulate the devotions, as described in a previous chapter. Let it be here observed that Hugh Bourne had expressly stipulated, when the house was licensed for such services, that no separate society should be established.

But the most interesting thing about this was the occasion which led to this course being taken. For this we must hark back to the date of the famous Norton Camp Meeting in 1807. A Mrs. Dunnell, a female preacher, was to have taken part in this Camp Meeting. Being in Tunstall on the Saturday, she received a flattering invitation from the Wesleyan superintendent to preach in the chapel there on the following day, and consented to do so. She was, apparently, unaware of the fact that the real design of the superintendent was to keep her away from the Norton Camp Meeting. Her failure to keep her appointment at Norton was a cause of disappointment, not to say dismay, to Hugh Bourne, who found himself short of preachers, a shortage, however, unexpectedly remedied by the arrival of Dr. Paul Johnson.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Dunnell had served the superintendent's purpose, and gained considerable popularity in Tunstall. But when she made another visit in the March of the following year, she found

the chapel closed against her. There was no change in the law. Then, as before, the Conference was just as much opposed to female preaching as to Camp Meetings; but it was now convenient to observe the law, as it was inconvenient when Mrs. Dunnell was needed as a counter attraction to the Norton Camp Meeting. This exclusion of the popular preacheress gave great offence, especially to Mr. Joseph Smith and Mr. James Steele, and the former forthwith offered his kitchen for her use. From that time it was so used on Friday evenings, Mrs. Dunnell and James Crawfoot and others occupying the famous pulpit which had been extemporised out of a chest of drawers. For some reason which is not quite apparent, Mr. Smith would not allow Clowes to preach, and because his friend was excluded Hugh Bourne would not plan himself.

It was this place, however, which became available for the ministrations of Clowes when he was excluded from the Methodist pulpits. That "they had put Billy off the plan," who could yet "outpreach them all," aroused Mr. Joseph Smith's wrath to such a point that he felt he must somehow checkmate the proceedings. Accordingly, he intimated to all and sundry that Clowes would preach in his kitchen, and from that time many regarded this as their proper place of worship, becoming known as "Clowesites." Meanwhile they were not content with merely holding services in Mr. Smith's

kitchen; they began to extend their labours, opening out fresh places. This was the spontaneous and unpremeditated expression of the passion for souls which burned in the hearts of these men. In this work William Clowes was so successful, and revealed such exceptional qualifications for evangelistic labour, that his friend, James Nixon, and his brother-in-law, Thomas Woodnorth, generously offered each to pay him five shillings per week if he would devote himself entirely to missionary work. Clowes could easily earn this sum in a couple of days at his employment, but after a little consideration and consultation with his wife the offer was accepted. Some extraordinary conversions took place under his labours, one at which Hugh Bourne was present being so remarkable that the report went abroad that "there were two men in the country who could convert anybody." The missionary work of Clowes extended over a considerable area, and we find him in company with James Crawfoot in the neighbourhood of Warrington.

Meanwhile, a little circuit of societies, with Tunstall as headquarters, had come into existence, and if anything was needed to give this organisation additional form and permanence, it was supplied by the Methodist authorities, who formally expelled James Steele, local preacher, superintendent of the Sunday School, the leader of two classes and a trustee, from their communion. His supposed offence was that he had been present at the worship

in Mr. Smith's kitchen, a lovefeast having been conducted by William Clowes there on Good Friday, 1811. As a matter of fact he was not present on the occasion, but as a relative of Mr. Smith, who was aged and infirm, he was much at the house, and often led the family worship. It was on the following Tuesday that the leaders' meeting, without trial, expelled James Steele, and a trustee entered the school the next Sunday and formally discharged the superintendent from his office. Mr. Steele quietly withdrew, and did his utmost to persuade his class members to go on as if nothing had happened. Some thirty of them, however, refused, and cast in their lot with the company meeting in Mr. Joseph Smith's kitchen.

The expulsion of James Steele was important on account of the exceptional character and influence of the man. Locally, he was the most striking personality in many ways the Methodists possessed, and his accession at once gave the Clowesites new prestige in the eyes of the community. There were now the Camp Meetingers, as those who had laboured much in connection with Hugh Bourne were termed; the Clowesites, as the associates of Clowes were called; while those who had become disaffected towards the Methodist Society were sometimes spoken of as Steelites.

Mr. Smith's kitchen was now too small, but Mr. John Boden placed a large room or warehouse at the disposal of the Clowesites, and here, shortly

afterwards, the services were regularly held. This, too, in turn became too small, and steps were taken to build a chapel. On June 11th, the Bourne's bought the land, and on July 13th the chapel was opened by James Crawfoot. It is significant that this first chapel was so constructed that if the Connexion should not continue, the building could readily be transformed into four houses. Nor is it without significance that the building was the private property of the Bournes until 1834, when it was formally transferred to the Primitive Methodist Connexion.

In tracing the development of two movements, it is difficult to preserve the precise chronological order of events. We must now hark back to an event which has always been regarded as of first rate importance—the formation of the Stanley Class. It will be recalled that Hugh Bourne and James Crawfoot engaged in evangelistic work purely with a view to the saving of men. It was a definite policy with them to get their converts associated with some Christian church.

At several preaching places the appointments were supplied on alternate weeks by the Wesleyans, and the peculiarity of the Stanley, or Standley, case, lies in the fact that a new departure was made by the refusal of the Wesleyans to continue this arrangement. This place had been missioned several times without success, and it was decided to re-open the mission by a Sunday's services

conducted by Mrs. Dunnell. She was late, and Hugh Bourne had commenced the service when she arrived. The result was the formation of a class of ten members, with J. Slater as leader. Their names were: Joseph Slater, Mary Slater, Elizabeth Baker, Susannah Rowcroft, Ralph Goodwin, Mary Goodwin, Samuel Simcox, Thomas Redfern, and Isaac Belford. The last survivor, Mary Slater, died in 1865.

Of this new class, or society, the Wesleyan superintendent, while putting the place on the plan, insisted at the following Quarterly Meeting that they (the Wesleyans) should have entire control and supply all the appointments themselves. It must be all in their own hands, or they would have nothing to do with it. The members must have nothing to do with the Bournes. When this ultimatum was delivered at the Quarterly Meeting, J. Brindley, who had pleaded for the continuance of the old policy, said: "Then yo mun lay your hands off it." This was decisive, and it became necessary to take entire charge of Stanley.

The hand of Hugh Bourne was thus forced by circumstances, and he found himself compelled to adopt a course to which hitherto he had been resolutely opposed—the formation of a separate Denomination. Such a Denomination was now formed, with its own classes and leaders, James Crawfoot, the paid preacher, and the Bournes, Thomas Cotton, F. Horobin, and Thomas Knight as

voluntary preachers. Let it be clearly borne in mind that there was no split, no secession. There was "cleanness of hands on both sides," neither taking a single member from the other. Places where appointments had been supplied fortnightly were quietly withdrawn from, without the loss to the Wesleyans of a single member. New places were, however, opened, and ere long there were thirteen places, and the membership had increased from ten to one hundred and thirty-six.

We find Hugh Bourne making preaching tours here and there, opening up south Staffordshire, and "staking out claims," so to speak, where in course of time the Tunstall, Brinkworth and Bristol Districts were formed. He makes the acquaintance of John Benton, who afterwards became a remarkably successful pioneer preacher. At Stockton Heath he meets a Mr. John Shegog, who brought an urgent request that he would visit London. And *mirabile dictu*, we find, on September 20th, 1810, Hugh Bourne and James Crawfoot setting out to mission London, where they saw some of the sights of the great city, were filled with pity for the multitudes of the inhabitants, and witnessed, in answer to prayer, the miraculous healing of one Anne Chapman. At the end of a fortnight they returned home, Hugh Bourne taking the precaution, as they had to travel by stage coach and outside, to purchase a pair of blankets as a protection against the cold. Afterwards, John Benton was sent as

a regular missionary to London. He laboured with considerable success, but coming to the conclusion that he was not the right man in the right place, he returned home, and London was left in its benighted condition for many years.

Meanwhile, Hugh Bourne has seen not only his brother James, but his other brothers, William and John, and his sister Hannah, converted. At Tunstall, and elsewhere, the brothers Hugh and James had incurred considerable financial responsibility. It is a curious thing that in connection with the execution of the conveyance deed of the new chapel at Tunstall, nobody could be got to sign the document, except the brothers Bourne, so that for many years the property was vested in them alone. This may in part serve to explain how it was that when the question of printing class tickets for the members of the various societies that had been raised up was mooted, Hugh Bourne wanted to know how the expense would be met. The utmost frugality and industry had to be practised by the brothers Bourne, especially as Hugh was in the main withdrawn from business and devoted to the work of preaching. It may be that he hesitated also because this was another irrevocable step towards the establishment of a new Denomination. It was Francis Horobin, of Ramsor, who pressed for this additional bond of union among the members and societies, and when Hugh Bourne inquired about the payment of the expense

that would thus be incurred, the reply came at once: "I will pay for the tickets out of my own pocket." "Very well, then," was the characteristic rejoiner, "if you will pay for them there may be tickets." Having laid the matter before the friends at Tunstall, with their concurrence Mr. Bourne ordered the printing of the tickets on May 30th, 1811, the said tickets bearing the date, May, 1811, with the text: "But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against." —Acts xxviii., 22, followed immediately underneath by the letter A, and yet again by the initials H.B. This ticket may be taken as the outward and visible sign of the union of the Camp Meeting Methodists and the Clowesites. A written plan for the months, June, July, August, and September was issued, having upon it fifteen preachers and eight preaching places.

The new Denomination was now fairly launched, but oddly enough, without a name. It was not till the February of the following year that the name Primitive Methodist was formally adopted. Hitherto the work of Bourne and Clowes and their associates had been directed towards the revival of primitive or early Methodism by a return to the spirit and methods, especially in the matter of out-door preaching, of Wesley and his coadjutors. The meeting of February 13th, 1812, held for the purpose of making the plan for the next quarter, was naturally

faced with the question of a name for the new Denomination ; and as naturally decided to express a fact by means of a name, by spelling the word primitive with a capital P. Henceforth the name was adopted of Primitive Methodist. Accordingly, the new plan was : " A Plan of the Preachers in the Society of the Primitive Methodists in the Tunstall Circuit." This was the first printed plan, and had on it twenty-three preachers and thirty-six preaching places. And so the child, now duly baptised, is sent forth upon a great and beneficent mission.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Hugh Bourne, Pioneer and Director	100
Bourne's Journals	100
Pen Portrait of Hugh Bourne	100
Clowes, the Preaching Pioneer	102
Marvellous Exploits of Clowes in Hull	103
Personal Appearance of Clowes	103
James Bourne's Character and Work	104
The Founders Created a Type of Workers	106
John Wedgwood's Work	107
Wedgwood, the First Pioneer Imprisoned	108
John Benton's Place	109
Benton's Revolt and Great Campaign	110
How Clowes Missioned the North	113
Johnny Oxtoby's Character and Achievements	114
Thomas Batty in Weardale	116
Joseph Spoor's Pioneer Work	118
Thomas King's Services	120
"Billy" Braithwaite's Mission Work	122
Robert Key's Wonderful Exploits	124
John Ride's Great Campaign	127
Ride and Bishop Imprisoned	129
Thomas Russell's Marvellous Work in Berkshire	130

CHAPTER VI.

OF ITS PIONEERS.

MR. G. K. CHESTERTON avers that "Romance consists of love and war." The pioneers of Primitive Methodism were to an extraordinary degree inspired with the passion of Divine love, and made ceaseless war upon the kingdom of darkness. Their heroic exploits, their herculean labours, their hairbreadth escapes, their quenchless zeal, their dauntless courage, their unfailing audacity, their fierce fight with poverty and hunger and weariness and mob brutality, and the marvellous and permanent success they achieved is one long romance which has added a new and brilliant chapter to the Acts of the Apostles.

Of Hugh Bourne much has been said already. He is one of the two men now universally recognised as the founders of Primitive Methodism. The story of his labours is one to fill the mind with astonishment. Through all the early years of the

Connexion he was a pioneer and director, often travelling forty and fifty miles a day on nothing but two or three hard-boiled eggs and a little bread. That a man of his intensely shy, retiring disposition should have been led to play such a great part is one of the most astonishing triumphs of the spirit of the Cross on record. The love of Christ constrained him. He was burdened with a sense of the sin and moral destitution of the people. In Lichfield he felt he could have died for the people. His Journals are among the most remarkable documents of the kind in existence, and reveal a mind of unusual strength, deep insight, and a mysticism which was always sane and practical.

Some five feet nine inches in height, Hugh Bourne was not at all prepossessing in appearance. The eyebrows were lowering, the face wrinkled; and although he was the first teetotaler in England, the most prominent feature of his face would not have given that impression. His gait was awkward, perhaps because he travelled more on his feet than any man of his time. As to his garb, his hat generally seemed to have seen better days; his coat, once blue, was now of an uncertain hue; his knee-breeches of velveteen reached to below the knees, while a pair of blue stockings and low, rough shoes completed his equipment. One of his boots handed to the author recently by Rev. R. Clemitson, who found it in the old Sunderland

Institute, has buttoned cloth tops which seem, however, to have been sewed on to the shoes by an amateur. As all his family had "run to fat," he had a horror of becoming corpulent. He regarded it as an affliction to be fought against with might and main. A walk of thirty miles a day and a diet suitable to a jail or a workhouse was the remedy he adopted. A moorlander in dress, gait, manners, but by the grace of God one of the founders of Primitive Methodism.

For the rest he was an intensely shy man, was never married, though once he proposed, *mirabile dictu*, in a class meeting; but as the sister did not at once consent, he took it as a sign that it was not the Lord's will that he should get married. Rustic simplicity, freedom from convention, strong common sense, and the very substance of Gospel truth characterised his sermons, which were expressed in simple Saxon, and spoken with a hurried, impetuous fervour, as one in haste to deliver his message and save the world.

If Clowes was the greatest evangelist of the Connexion, Bourne was its Moses—its lawgiver and the chief framer of its Constitution; and from his pen, more than from any other, have come the materials for an authentic history of the early days. The simple records of his Journals—of herculean labour and of suffering patiently borne, inspire wonder and amazement. And this was continued right on to old age.

When seventy-three he visited our Churches in Canada and the United States, and the record tells how he would rise at four, and begin his journey without breakfast. After walking eleven miles, he would take his first meal, then preach; walk on eight miles to Toronto and preach again. Incessant toil he could bear, but strife, disaffection, and disloyalty sometimes well-nigh broke his heart, and the strong, stern man would weep like a child. When worn out he was given a quarter's rest, but was found at work hard as ever at the end of a fortnight. The great pathfinder of Primitive Methodism, he anticipated even the Temperance movement, and was a teetotaler before the teetotalers began their society.

Among the great preaching pioneers, William Clowes has, of course, the pre-eminence, not only for his work in and around Tunstall, but for the marvellous mission work he accomplished all over the country. Hence by common consent he shares with Hugh Bourne the honour of founding the Connexion. The story of his spiritual conflicts, his night-long wrestlings in prayer, and the marvellous results which followed his irresistible onslaughts against the kingdom of darkness, is full of romance. Brutal mobs assailed him, church bells and bands of music were employed to drown his clarion voice; he was pelted with rotten eggs and cruel stones, and kicked under foot till he was battered and bruised. But nothing dismayed him.

Like a flame of fire he swept over Staffordshire, through Derbyshire, Nottingham, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Yorkshire, until he reached the sea at Hull, the scene of his early exploits in sin and folly. But here was to be the scene of far greater exploits in the service of Jesus Christ. In less than four months four hundred persons had been gathered into Christian fellowship, and in less than a year Hull was a circuit. It then became the centre of the most astounding evangelistic achievements, embracing Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and extending as far as Lincoln, Norfolk, and yet more distant places. Within seven years, twenty-one independent circuits had been made, with a membership of 8,455, which, with the membership of Hull itself, made a total of 11,996. Clowes had many lieutenants and officers of courage and ability in this wonderful campaign, but he was the Great-heart of the movement, inspiring, guiding, teaching others, so far as he could, the laws of that spiritual realm in which he was such a master.

Clowes was of middle stature, firmly built, broad chested, but curiously narrow between the shoulders. He walked erect, and his gait was dignified. The face was open and pleasant, the forehead high and slightly receding, the nose shapely and long, the mouth large and beautifully formed,—the orator's mouth. The dominant feature of the face was the eye, which was large, luminous, and with

a strange, piercing power that often seemed to transfix the sinner. If the eye was the feature of the face, the voice was the feature of the man. Powerful, resonant, often acquiring a strange tremor which seemed to search the depths of men's souls, it was the organ, equally with the eye, of a personal magnetism which took men captive for Jesus Christ.

In dress he was neat and plain—the golden mean. A single-breasted coat, a broad-brimmed hat and small clothes—with an occasional adventure into trousers—made up his ordinary habiliments. A broadly-folded neckerchief was worn loosely round the neck, and if the style of the hair was not the "plain form" like Hugh Bourne's, it was probably because there was not much of it, and what there was had to be economically disposed with a view to hiding the nakedness of the land. He had winning manners and great social qualities. His scholastic attainments and literary gifts were limited, but he was as much the superior of Hugh Bourne in the pulpit and on the platform, as he was in scholarship, administrative and legislative ability, immeasurably his inferior. Mighty in prayer, he often brought down a heavenly unction that wrapped the whole congregation in a cloud of glory, and under his preaching multitudes of sinners were arrested and saints sanctified.

A great man's brother or son will often suffer by comparison. The part James Bourne played in

the early days of the Camp Meeting movement is often lost sight of, but it was really noteworthy all the same. It is true he hesitated after the first Camp Meeting, but having once made up his mind, he loyally seconded his brother and shared the expense and labour involved. It was a dream that finally decided this shrewd, sober, matter-of-fact man to stand by the Camp Meetings, and thenceforward he was heart and soul with the movement. If Hugh Bourne was "the father of them that walk to their appointments," James was their elder brother. We see him rising early on a Saturday morning, and working hard on the farm till noon, then walking thirty-five miles to Warrington, where he sleeps. Early on the Sunday morning he is off to Rizley, in Lancashire. After preaching three times and holding other services, he returns into Cheshire to sleep. We find him once more at work on the farm hoeing potatoes by Monday noon. Walking eighty miles on foot, doing well on for two days' labour on the farm, and a Sabbath full of toil into the bargain, all in the space of three days and two nights, make a record that none of the pioneers would have despised.

If Hugh Bourne was the first Connexional Editor, James Bourne was the first Book Steward, and the brothers shared the monetary responsibility involved. Had there been a loss they would have borne it; as there was a profit, it went to the Connexion. If overshadowed by his brother, who

was built on somewhat larger lines, and gifted with greater initiative and force of character, he was a devoted man. More calm and self-possessed than Hugh, he is said to have exercised over him a mild and beneficial influence. Often "chairman" in the early annual Conferences, he stands in our records as the President of 1826. At the Jubilee Camp Meeting of 1857, he was the sole survivor of those present at the first Camp Meeting, but passed away ere the celebrations of 1860 were entered upon. "The aged pilgrim," runs the Conference record, "arrived at the threshold of our jubilant season, but ere we commenced our songs in the militant Church, he joined the Church triumphant in heaven."

If Bourne and Clowes were the founders of Primitive Methodism, we must account them such, not merely by reason of the work they did in organisation and in evangelism, but because they created a type of religious workers, who in devotion and heroic toil, as well as in the methods they employed, multiplied indefinitely the influence of their spiritual fathers. It is the possession of this power, which within limits readily recognised, we may term spiritual *biogenesis*, that distinguishes the really great religious reformer. Wesley was richly endowed with it, while Whitefield possessed it in only a limited degree. Hence the difference in the number of their followers to-day. The spread and permanence of Primitive Methodism is

to be traced in no small measure to the fact that our founders were able to raise up a race of men endowed with the same type of spiritual power, and capable of carrying on the same methods of religious propaganda as themselves.

In the long and wonderful line of spiritual sons and disciples thus called into being, only a few of whom can be sketched in this chapter, John Wedgwood stands first. A scion of the famous family to which Clowes belonged, his youth was spent in the pottery business, in which he earned good wages as a "thrower." That youth was marked neither by the austerity of Bourne nor the extreme profligacy of Clowes in their unregenerate days. Russel's "Seven Sermons," Paine's "Age of Reason," and the Hyper-Calvinists, made up the conflicting forces which influenced him in his teens. But in 1809, and when twenty-one years of age, he was soundly converted. Sarah Kirkland heard him preach in 1812, and by 1813 his power as a Camp Meeting preacher was already recognised. Journeying to one of the early Camp Meetings at this time in company with Clowes, his zeal in preaching to all and sundry on the road consumed so much time that night overtook the two travellers, and they got lost on a common, narrowly escaping death from precipices and moss-pits on the one hand, and robbery or murder from persons of evil reputation by whom they were pursued, on the other. Later in the same year we find Bourne

and Wedgwood travelling thirty miles to attend a Camp Meeting at Cannock Wood, throwing themselves heartily into the prayer meeting at the end of the day at which they "came into faith."

Wedgwood was not a recognised travelling preacher till 1829, and his becoming such then is attributed to some change in his circumstances. But all the same, he was one of the mightiest among the pioneer missionaries. His strong, square face, and firmly set lips, give the impression of a man not easily intimidated; and it is not surprising to learn that he was a missionary "who made his own plan as he went," going here and there as invitations came, or as openings presented themselves. He ate sparingly, but on his meagre diet laboured like a Hercules. He would often carry on his meetings till late at night, and rise for a five o'clock service next morning. From the pen of Thomas Bateman we have a glimpse of him standing on Egerton Green, with an Indian handkerchief tied round his head, his look solemn, his sermon strange and arresting. More than once, in the midst of his sermon, he struck up a hymn. A breaker up of new ground, he left the work of organising societies to others.

He is notable as the pioneer prisoner: the first Primitive Methodist to be imprisoned for out-door preaching. He was the first of a considerable line who furnished a new type of prisoner: genial in

the presence of the magistrates, whom they hesitated not to admonish and sometimes baffle, and carrying on a fervent evangelism among the prisoners. Grantham Market Cross has the honour of the arrest of Wedgwood, and as the prisoner was escorted to the Guildhall he sang :

> "Wicked men I scorn to fear
> Though they persecute me here."

Just the note of conviction and defiance we should expect from a man like John Wedgwood. He refused to give bail when committed to take his trial at the Quarter Sessions, until he was urgently needed at the approaching Camp Meeting at Buckminster. Meanwhile, his imprisonment brought William Clowes upon the scene, which led to that wider mission of the fiery Tunstall evangelist, destined to have such far-reaching consequences. At the Quarter Sessions Wedgwood was acquitted, to the intense chagrin and confusion of his enemies, and pushed forward that campaign in Cheshire and the Midlands which laid the foundations of many powerful circuits, in one of which, Crewe, the Wedgwood Memorial Chapel stands as a lasting reminder of his heroic labours, and will keep his memory green in coming generations.

Among the pioneers John Benton fills a large place. To quote the description of him given by Hugh Bourne, when the leader of the Camp Meeting movement first ran across him during an evangelistic

tour in 1810, he was "an extraordinary man." Seldom has a quenchless zeal triumphed so marvellously over difficulties and disadvantages. Having no grammar and small command of language, he was told by a local preacher on one occasion that he was a "scandal on the cause of Christ." Benton seems to have borne the reproof with meekness; but when, on a certain Good Friday, after preaching from the text: "It is finished," the rough colliers were falling under conviction on every side, he found the local preacher looking on in amazement, he could not resist the temptation, as he pointed to the scene, to say with significant emphasis: "This is grammar!"

This apostle of conviction learned, under Hugh Bourne, to be also a son of consolation to mourning sinners, and rapidly grew into an evangelist of extraordinary influence and power. He was the chief of the free-lances of the pioneer days. In 1811 he actually missioned London, just the kind of forlorn hope to suit his peculiar genius, and if his success had been followed up, Primitive Methodism would have had a different position there to-day. Later, when a halt was called in the work of extension, so that attention might be given to the consolidation of the Connexion, he revolted. "Primitive Methodism was raised up to go through the nation," and when his plan was sent to him, he promptly returned it, with the doggerel lines on the back:

"A plan from God I have to mind,
A better plan I cannot find;
If you can, pray let me know,
And round the circuit I will go."

Benton had not only the will, but the means to "go on his own." Having compiled a hymn book, he printed a thousand copies and set forth on an evangelising tour, accompanied by Eleazer Hathorn of the one leg, whom the people took pity on and furnished with a useful nag. The story of Benton's pioneer labours from this time is one long romance. Hugh Bourne describes him as like "a man let loose." Setting at nought the ordinance of consolidation, which threatened the whole Camp Meeting movement with dissolution, he originated over a wide area one of the most extraordinary religious revivals ever known in England. He was essentially a pioneer, and left to others the work of organising the societies and circuits he founded. Meteor-like, he shot here and there. We have glimpses of him in his wonderful campaign that set the Midlands on fire—now fixing with his eye a group of the careless and profane as he casually enters a village, and startling them with his strange greeting:

"Stop, poor sinners, stop and think
Before you further go;
Can you *sport* upon the brink
Of everlasting woe?"

Forthwith the most powerful impression would be

NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
LIBRARY

made, followed by the most momentous results; or facing a "Little Sodom," like Bottesford, with dauntless mien, while the ringing of the church bells, the blowing of wind instruments, the beating of a big drum, an extemporised dog-fight and a shower of stones, rotten eggs and filth, fail to silence him or divert him from his purpose; or at Grantham, where he is riding in the carriage of Sir William Manners, preaching to that astute politician "the fall of man, the restoration by Jesus Christ, repentance and faith, justification and sanctification, the day of judgment, heaven and hell," while the restless congregation of one is glad when the end of the journey is reached; or at Leicester, where he opens the campaign that is to give a powerful circuit to Primitive Methodism with a marvellous sermon from the text: "Let me die the death of the righteous," while men listened in wonder and amazement to the "ringing tones" of his "stentorian voice," which, "clear as a clarion," carried his message far and wide; or advancing generously hundreds of pounds to help difficult chapel cases, so that next to the Brothers Bourne he was the greatest financial stay the Connexion had; or, "in great force" at Round Hill Camp Meeting, preaching on "the great day of God's wrath," and so lifting up his voice to arrest a threatened panic in the audience as to injure that magnificent organ, and for a time he was silenced; or, more wonderful still, filling that master of oratory, Robert Hall, with

astonishment at his command over his hearers; right on to his romantic marriage with one of his own converts, "the staid daughter" of a well-to-do yeoman farmer and old-fashioned Churchman, whose refusal to sanction the marriage was met by his daughter riding on a pillion behind her lover to be wed. It is delightful to learn that she "made a good Primitive," encouraged her husband in his work, and occasionally herself conducted house-services. Nor is it surprising to learn that, when Primitive Methodism became more fully organised, John Benton was, during the rest of his life, "an unattached Primitive Methodist." An unbending individualist, who took his plan from no man, he "would not be under any one," and having done his work, retired into private life and died in peace, February 5th, 1856.

In the brief sketch already given of the pioneering labours of William Clowes, reference has been made to his extensive missions northwards from Hull. The extent of that work may be gathered from a statement he makes in 1822, when setting out from Carlisle to attend the Hull Quarterly Meeting, a distance of one hundred and eighty miles, to the effect that he could preach his way from Newcastle to Hull, night by night, without any break, on ground that he himself had missioned through and broken up, and that during the quarter previous, similar work had been done between Newcastle and Carlisle. The Hull circuit, therefore, extended

from Carlisle in Cumberland to Spurn Point in Holderness, an extent of more than two hundred miles.

Associated with this work there are a few other names deserving of special mention, whose labours as pioneers will long be remembered. Johnny Oxtoby has been justly styled "one of the aureoled saints of Primitive Methodism." And this not by reason of intellectual culture or mental ability; he possessed neither; but his was the faith which removes mountains. Behold him! Of middle stature, broad-set, sharp-featured, with brown eyes, light-brown hair, combed down in the orthodox fashion of the time, almost to the eyebrows; his coat and vest snuff-coloured, his silk handkerchief chocolate-coloured, while corduroy breeches, blue stockings, a broad-brimmed hat, and hobnailed boots completed his equipment. His speech was the homely dialect of the East Riding. He entered the ministry in 1824, but seems to have been more or less a free-lance. His power lay in the spiritual realm, and there he was indeed a prince of God. Six hours each day he usually spent on his knees, and thus he girded himself for his amazing conquests.

Stories linger in various parts of the country of his wonderful sayings and doings, but his most memorable achievement was the re-missioning of Filey. The work there had been fruitless, and the Quarterly Meeting was contemplating withdrawal. Questioned in the meeting as to his opinion, it was

given in characteristic fashion. "What do I think?" he retorted; "I think the Lord has a great work to do at Filey, and if you will send me, I will go, and live upon potatoes and salt, and lie on a board if necessary, before it shall be given up." It was decided to give the place another trial, and Oxtoby was sent. He set out a few days later. Asked where he was going, he replied: "To Filey, where the Lord is gannin to revive His work." When he came in sight of the town he fell on his knees behind a hedge, and there pleaded with God for hours for the success of his mission. A miller passing by overheard the strange prayer: "Thou munna mak a feal o' me. I told them at Bridlington Thou was gannin to revive Thy work, and Thou mun dea so or I shall never be able to show my face among them again, and then what will the people say about praying and believing?" At length the assurance came, and rising from his knees, he exclaimed: "It is done, Lord! it is done! Filey is taken! Filey is taken!" And Filey was taken forthwith. A great revival began, which completely revolutionised the moral condition of the place, and laid the foundations of a powerful church, which abides to this day.

The great river which Clowes set flowing through the northern counties had many tributaries, and sometimes the original impulse was not sufficient to accomplish much good. But ever and anon some fresh impulse would come from some new labourer.

Thomas Batty, "the Apostle of Weardale," did work of this class. His life is full of romance. Before he came in contact with Primitive Methodism, he had served several years on a man-of-war, had been in the disastrous Walcheren expedition of 1809, and had a narrow escape at the siege of Flushing. His conversion took place through the reading of a Bible given to him by an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and in 1813 he returned home. Having attended a Camp Meeting near Driffield, the Wesleyans, with whom he had associated himself, required him either to cease attending such meetings or be deprived of his membership with them. With much reluctance he chose the latter, and in 1821 became a Primitive Methodist missionary on one of the Hull branches.

He made his appearance in Weardale the following year. To the big men of the dales he seemed slight in build, but remarkably active and sprightly. Neat and clean in person, and of a lively, witty temperament, he presented religion to these sturdy hill-men in a new and attractive garb. He had a soft, musical voice, and could use it all day long without tiring. His fertile imagination, fluent utterance and homely Saxon speech, combined with unfailing tact and consummate generalship, presented a combination of qualities which, when backed by genuine character, will never fail to win the dalesman.

But though he toiled terribly, and crowds listened

to his preaching, and even wept under it, they did not yield. This filled the missionary with astonishment and despair. He had not yet gripped the fact that the dalesman will not capitulate at once; he must be laid siege to. A friendly toll-gate keeper, with whom he lodged, one night let him into the secret. "Come and preach about here every night, and you will soon have a hundred people in society. You don't know them as I do. They talk to me, and I tell you the whole country is under conviction." Batty took the advice and tried concentration. At the end of the quarter the great revival was begun, and one hundred souls had been added to the roll. The next quarter three hundred more had been added; the third quarter saw an additional two hundred, and in the fourth quarter two hundred and fifty more had united with the Society. The great revival transformed the whole countryside, swept over the fells to Allendale, and Alston and Nenthead and Brough, and away down the vale of the Eden into the West country. And so the Dales were won for Christ and Primitive Methodism. A few sentences can tell the wonderful story, but at what cost of toil and hardship in long weary journeys over rugged mountains and trackless fells and through swollen streams was all this accomplished! But of that the missionaries thought little, so great was the joy of saving men, and so rich was the harvest to be reaped.

But immense toil and hardship was not the only price that required to be paid by men like Thomas Batty. Genial, witty, and bright as was Batty's disposition, he knew what it was to "travail in birth for souls," and the experience through which he passed before the revival began was a very Gethsemane. There was one never-to-be-forgotten night after a fruitless service at Ireshopeburn. The spiritual conditions were aggravated by those of a physical kind, for the subsequent journey was through snow and water and slush. Extreme depression settled down upon the missionary, and he "could only sigh and groan and weep." So sorrowful was he that he could scarce eat any supper, and the sad countenance that he wore at this period was long remembered in the dale. The world is not to be saved except at the cost of blood, and before the marvellous revival which swept over the dales began, Thomas Batty had to pay the price to the full. His subsequent labours, difficulties, trials and triumphs cannot be recorded here; but this was not the last revival he witnessed in the north country, and Westgate was not the only circuit that he founded.

Before we leave the North country there is another pioneer, though of a later date, who made an extraordinary impression on the people, and whose name will long be fragrant. Joseph Spoor has been described as the St. Francis of Primitive Methodism in the North of England. He ranks

among the giants, such were his faith and earnestness, and so marvellous was the power that attended his ministry. In early life a keelman on the Tyne, of lithe and vigorous frame, he laboured in the ministry so terribly that he more than once broke down, and it was imagined that his work was done. He once travelled seventy miles along roads deep in snow, and his fare at the end of his second day was a penny roll and a drink of water. Said Hugh Bourne, when some opposed the young man's entering the ministry owing to his scholastic deficiencies: "What he is as a preacher I don't know; but he is famous at praying and soul-saving, and these are the chief things in a man entering our ministry!" The daring, fertility of resource, and decisive action in emergencies, as well as the buoyancy and gaiety of the Newcastle keelman, were all touched to finer issues when he became the pilot of souls to the great burden bearer.

The story of his ministry is one long romance: his early struggles on a barren field, his narrow escape from imprisonment for preaching at the market cross of Ripon, his storming of Cockfield, originally missioned by William Clowes, but then languishing to extinction, where he filled the chapel by an announcement that he was going to "sell the devil up and leave him neither stick nor stool;" his smiting hip and thigh with conviction a band of conspirators who came to his service with the intention of removing the prop which sustained

the building, and letting down the whole congregation, and the marvellous revivals he witnessed in circuit after circuit. In those days a preacher who stayed four and five years in a station was counted a wonderful man; but Spoor did this, in spite of the fact that his stock of sermons was small, and he preached them over and over to the same congregations. Whole countrysides were transformed under his ministry, powerful churches were founded, and from his revivals came many local preachers, officials, and ministers.

Reluctantly leaving the pioneers of the far North —for there is a great multitude whose doings cannot be chronicled here, and the planting of the flag of the infant Denomination as far north as Glasgow and Edinburgh, and other places, is a fascinating and romantic story—we turn to the East, where two or three stalwarts did mighty deeds by the power of the Holy Spirit. The name of Thomas King figures largely in official records through the early years. Among the first fruits of the Nottingham mission, it is not surprising that, as a man of more than ordinary intelligence and education, he was thrust out into the mission field, when, as a married man, the step involved great pecuniary sacrifices. His name figures in the list of those present at the famous preparatory meeting, held at Nottingham, at which were decided the basal principles of the young church's polity. Market Rasen was assigned him as the

sphere of his labour, and thither he travelled on foot. While toiling among the moors and wolds and marshes he "heard of Grimsby," then an obscure place of less than three thousand souls, and determined to mission it. Guided to within two miles of the village, he entered it alone, and after drinking at the pump preached his first sermon on a piece of waste ground, and with a handy wheelbarrow as his pulpit. One of the skirmishers of the main army had previously paid a flying visit to Grimsby, but to Thomas King belongs the honour of forming the first society of eight members, November 3rd, 1819. This was in a room procured "up the town" by Farmer Holt, who became one of the makers of Primitive Methodism in Grimsby. A stable was the first meeting-place, then a warehouse, afterwards vacated for a disused chapel in Loft Street. Thomas King, with his strength to labour, his buoyancy, his tact and courtesy, was "a veritable missionary Bishop," who laid securely the foundations of Primitive Methodism in this part of East Anglia. It is not surprising to find that he was President of the Conference in 1835 and 1848, Book Steward in 1854, and that as the "oldest travelling preacher in active work," he preached the Jubilee Sermon at the Tunstall Conference of 1860, a striking evidence of his intellectual and physical vigour.

If Thomas King was the "Missionary Bishop" of the Grimsby region, the Apostle of North-west

Lincolnshire was William Braithwaithe ; for though he has never figured as a man of intellectual force or pulpit power, all the fondest traditions of this particular district gather round his name. "Billy" Braithwaite, as he is familiarly called to this day, was sent out, along with Thomas Saxton, by the Nottingham circuit in 1818 to Gainsborough. Thomas Cooper, then a lad of fourteen, heard them singing their way along the street to the market-place, and ran out to see the meaning of so unusual a sound ; he bears striking testimony to the wonderful reformation effected by these "Ranter" missionaries in some of the worst characters in the town. "Billy" was one of the eccentrics of the time, raised up of God to carry on this work. Like Benton and Oxtoby, he was essentially a free-lance, and could only work on his own lines. Like Benton, too, he seems to have had some means of his own, and could afford to be independent. If the scholastic attainments of these men were slender, they possessed great wealth of spiritual resource, and knew how to draw on the Bank of Heaven. Of the many stories that linger in the districts "Billy" Braithwaite missioned, one or two will effectively "snap-shot" the man. The first belongs to East Stockwith, on the banks of the Trent. A farmer one day, busy in his field, heard a voice loud in expostulation and entreaty. It evidently came from behind a hedge, and leaving his horses he peeped through to get sight of the

disputants. But there was only one man, and he on his knees. His eyes were closed, his hands clasped, and the tears running down his cheeks. The words of expostulation and entreaty were addressed to One unseen, and their urgency was extraordinary: "*Thou must* give me souls. I cannot preach without souls. Lord, give me souls, or I shall die." The words still, after the lapse of nearly ninety years, have power to thrill the reader, and it is small wonder that the farmer was awe-struck as he returned to his ploughing. At night he related the strange occurrence to his wife, who exclaimed: "Why, he must be the man who has been round saying that he is going to preach at the sluice-head." "Then let me have my things," was the prompt rejoinder, "for I'm going to hear him." That farmer joined the first class there, became a useful official, and died in the full triumph of faith.

Like some other of the pioneers, "Billy" had in him a touch of the prophet, and on occasion could denounce men with terrible emphasis. In the annals of these days are many stories of the punishment that overtook the persecutors, but not often in seeming fulfilment of a prediction. When, however, "Billy" Braithwaite missioned Appleby, a village between Brigg and Winterton, something of this kind happened. The preacher took his stand on the basal stonework of the village cross, and commenced to sing. Presently the steward of

the estate came, and, as one dressed in a little brief authority, peremptorily ordered the preacher to desist. When the order was not obeyed, he tried to pull Braithwaite down. This not proving as easy as it looked, the steward procured a crowbar from the smithy, and with the help of two men set to work to prize the stones from under the preacher's feet. At length Braithwaite's foundations giving way, he was compelled to step down into the road. His enemies thought him silenced, but he had for them still a parthian shot. Fixing them with his eye he said in solemn tones: "People of Appleby, mark my words, if any one of these three men die a natural death, then God never sent me to preach here to-day. They think they have prevented the truth from being declared to you, but they have not, for God will raise up a cause in this place, and a prosperous one too." Both prophecies were fulfilled. The steward shortly afterwards fell from the church tower and broke his neck; one of the men was gored to death by a bull, and the other was drowned in a shallow "dyke." A prosperous cause was raised up at Appleby, and from the house where services were originally held came James and Robert W. Keightley, both able and honoured ministers of the church of their father.

But the pioneer whose name is above all others asscciated with East Anglia is Robert Key. In the force of his individuality, the power of his oratory, the extent of his labours, as well as in the

romance of his life and the brilliance of his achievements, he holds a foremost place among the remarkable men who transformed much of this dark corner of England into a very garden of the Lord. A wild, rough coal heaver at Yarmouth, so rough that his presence at the services for the first time occasioned some trepidation among the worshippers, he was converted in 1823, and five years later entered the ministry. His first circuit, North Walsham, sent him to mission central Norfolk. There his courage, his immense physical stamina, his native wit and resource, were tested to the utmost. In some parts of that Mattishall district Satan had his seat. For ignorance, debasement and brutality the people were notorious. The missionary knew what it was to be kicked down and then kicked up again, to be wounded by the hand of the parish clerk, to be abused from the magistrates' bench with a virulence worthy of Billingsgate, and to wrestle with the powers of darkness all night until the break of day. But his great heart, his quenchless zeal, his ready wit, his breezy disposition, his pluck, his daring and his moral enthusiasm, carried him triumphantly through it all. In three years he missioned a district forty miles long, raising out of the ground, so to speak, nearly as many churches, and transformed a country seething with sedition and terrorised by incendiarism and violence into a peaceful, well-ordered community, in which some seven hundred

persons were enrolled as members of the church, many of whom had been leaders of sedition and champions of destruction.

Hadleigh, another of Robert Key's mission fields, was still more difficult soil. If the people had had a little more Gospel they had imbibed more doctrinal error: Antinomianism abounded. Some of the places were notorious for their wickedness. Polstead was little better than a den of thieves. There were seventeen unlicensed beer houses in the village, and the inhabitants often figured at the County Assizes. Here Key's success was marvellous. Stories of his dauntless courage and physical prowess abound. "You black-mouthed swearer," he once said to a noisy disturber of a service in the old sand-pit at Swanton Mozley, "your master will pay you rare wages before long." The stern rebuke subdued the disturber instantly, and his wages were not long delayed. "There will be no back door in hell," he said to a woman seeking to escape from the service and her convictions. "Young man! you must decide for Christ to-night, or you will never have another chance," was another of his strange sayings, and the young man never had a chance of salvation again. On occasion he would seize a disturber, and lifting him to the door, hurl him across the road into the hedge with a force that made any repetition of the process quite unnecessary. A man heard him preaching half-a-mile away, and throwing down his spade went to

the service. That night he got converted, and, telling the story sixty years afterwards, he said: "I never thought I was such a sinner afore, but he made me rightdown afeared. That's his portrait," he continued, pointing to a steel engraving. "I shan't see him any more down here, but I shall know him up there. I shall be like a star in his crown, for he plucked me as a brand from the burning." "I fancy I see him now," said another forty years afterwards, "with a head like a lion, his hair as black as a raven, and a voice like thunder pouring forth the truth in streams, until the praying people round him shouted again and again, and we who weren't saved trembled like the autumn leaves, and swayed to and fro like a heavy crop of wheat before the harvest wind."

But some of the most astonishing triumphs were won by the pioneers among the agricultural labourers in the south of England. Here figure famous names like John Petty, Richard Jukes, Richard Davies, and George Warner; but foremost among them all are those of John Ride and Thomas Russell. John Ride was one of the greatest missionaries and circuit superintendents the Primitive Methodist Church has ever produced. To the fervour and passion and quenchless ardour of the missionary he added the caution and breadth and largeness of aim of the ecclesiastical statesman. In the face of the man, as it has come down to us, with the hair "worn in a plain form," the firmly-set mouth and

strong jaw, we gain a glimpse of the singleness of purpose and the unbending determination which carried him through his herculean toils. We cease to marvel that he became the maker of the famous Brinkworth circuit, which, when founded in 1833, included places which now constitute at least a dozen circuits, or that he missioned an area which has since given to the Connexion a dozen more.

Converted under Eleazer Hathorn, he found peace some time after as he walked through the fields from a class meeting, and throwing his hat in the air shouted, "Glory." He received his first class ticket at the same time as Sarah Kirkland, and as early as 1813 Hugh Bourne discerned in him a future preacher. He began to preach three years later, and in 1820 emigrated to the United States. There he lost his wife, and soon afterwards returned to this country and to his evangelistic work in Derbyshire. Thrust out shortly afterwards into the ministry, he was employed on the Cheshire mission. He opened Wrexham, and found his way to Liverpool, where he was imprisoned for preaching in the open air. His liberation is said to have been due to the intervention of Dr. Adam Clarke.

Then we find him at Ashbourne, where he only escaped a trap laid for him by prudent flight. Stationed at Tunstall in 1823, he soon moved on to pioneer work in the Brinkworth district, where he was to do the great work of his life as the apostle of Wiltshire, and became associated with Thomas

Russell, as we shall find later, in the missioning of Berkshire.

At Micheldever, in 1834, John Ride and Edward Bishop were imprisoned for holding a missionary meeting on the charge of leading and heading a riotous mob, being armed with bludgeons and obstructing the thoroughfare. If they would have promised to preach there no more they would have been liberated. When the trial came the case broke down, and the magistrates were glad to get rid of them. Appointed in 1845 as a visitor of the Home Missions, John Ride had among the regulations for his guidance one requiring him not to arrange work which could not be executed by any man of ordinary mental and physical energy. His quenchless zeal carried him to Australia, as if no adequate field of toil remained for him in this country; but there failing health soon necessitated his superannuation. He had discovered at last the limit of his strength, and left the work he so much loved to younger men.

Scarcely second to John Ride in the toils and triumphs of those years was Thomas Russell. Though not so highly gifted as some, he possessed the well-knit frame, the fiery zeal and untiring devotion of the pioneers. He could meet persecution of the most brutal kind with a dauntless bearing, and sometimes a rare dignity, where dignity is so difficult to compass. His, too, was the British pluck and courage which never knows when it is

defeated. Few of the pioneers met with such determined opposition or witnessed such signal success.

Called out to travel at twenty-three, he was sent the following year to Brinkworth, as the colleague of John Ride. Soon after this the Berkshire mission was opened, and for five months not a single society was formed. Appointed definitely to this mission in September, 1829, Thomas Russell began the work that was to be attended with such hardship and suffering and to issue in such brilliant success. He was sometimes reduced to feeding on wild nuts and berries. It was in the following February that he and his superintendent had the memorable meeting in the neighbourhood of Ashdown, where the famous battle was fought. Theirs, however, was a spiritual conflict. Russell walked ten miles to this meeting for consultation and prayer. The Conference was drawing to a close, and they were about to part, when it was proposed that they should turn aside into the coppice "for another round of prayer." Entering the coppice, they threw themselves on their knees amid the snow and pleaded with God to give them Berkshire. The round of prayer lasted for hours, and at last Russell sprang to his feet, exclaiming, as he pointed across the country, the prospect of which was bounded by the Hampshire hills: "Yonder country is ours, yonder country is ours, and we will have it." Up to that time everything had been dark, but now

a brighter day dawned. One day the young missionary was eighteen hours on his feet, and travelled thirty-five miles, preaching or trying to preach—for he met with the most brutal persecution in three different villages—four times; but at the end of three years there were nearly thirteen hundred members in that circuit.

But amid this splendid success there were seasons of darkness. At Chaddleworth, under the pretence that he had sold hymn books and magazines without a licence, Thomas Russell was arrested and brought before the magistrate. The sentence was, either to give up preaching there or pay a fine of ten pounds. Thomas Russell refused to do either, and was committed to Abingdon jail for three months with hard labour. One month of the three he herded with felons, alternating between the treadmill and picking oakum. Illness compelled the calling in of the doctor, whose verdict was that he was there to be punished, and punished he must be by ten hours at the wheel daily. An application to the Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty secured his release. Through long years he toiled in other parts of the country, and at last was superannuated, sorely against his will. His finest memorial will ever be the churches he founded in Berkshire, where to-day there are more Primitive Methodist congregations than belong to any other Nonconformist body.

CONTENTS.

	Page
John Wesley and Women Preachers	133
Hugh Bourne and Dinah Morris	134
Hugh Bourne saw Value of Women Preachers	134
Sarah Kirkland the First of this Line	134
The Life and Labours of Mary Porteous	138
Hannah Parrott and Thomas Kendall	141
Jane Brown and Canaan Street, Nottingham	142
Jane Ansdale in Weardale	143
Elizabeth Johnson Travelling at Sixteen	145
Elizabeth Smith Lost on a Moor	146
Mary Crossley in Hull	148
Mary Birks Asked to go to America	149
Miss Buck's Remarkable Gifts	150
Elizabeth Bultitude's Life and Labours	151
Mrs. C. Hallam	154
Mrs. Hirst, a Quaker Primitive Methodist	155
Quaint Simplicity of Dress of Women Preachers	158
Anna Taylor Sacrifices Her Tresses	158

CHAPTER VII.

OF ITS WOMEN PREACHERS.

AMONG the most picturesque features of the early days of Primitive Methodism was its female ministry. If it called forth considerable criticism, it excited immense curiosity, and the report that a woman was to preach at a Camp Meeting ensured a vast audience. In nothing did John Wesley reveal more strikingly his ability to rise above prejudice than in his attitude towards the employment of women as preachers. He believed that pious women were perfectly free to preach Christ in public, and the Conference of 1787 expressed itself as having no objection to Sarah Mallett being "a preacher in our connexion so long as she preaches the Methodist doctrine and attends to our discipline." On one occasion Wesley records that he heard the sainted Fletcher preach an excellent sermon in the church in the morning, and Mrs. Fletcher a "more excellent sermon" in the school-room in the evening. He also sent a female preacher to revive the declining cause at Norwich.

At the beginnning of the last century, however, the Wesleyans had become somewhat conservative in regard to the employment of female preachers, and few were allowed in their pulpits. That singular openmindedness, which was so remarkable a feature in Hugh Bourne, enabled him readily to perceive the immense value of gifted and devoted women in evangelistic work, and from the beginning he favoured their employment. He had on more than one occasion been associated with Mrs. Samuel Evans, made for ever famous by George Eliot as Dinah Morris in "Adam Bede," and had been greatly impressed by her gifted and powerful ministry. He had also heard Mrs. Fletcher herself, and these specimens of the woman preacher were eminently calculated to disabuse his mind of any prejudice that may have existed on that score. Hence he very early began to employ such as were converted under the labours of himself and his fellow workers where he found them possessing the necessary gifts and graces. Many hundreds of women in this way became local preachers in the early years, and quite a number were employed as regular travelling preachers. As late as 1834 nine were received into the ministry by the Conference in one year. The last of the race, Miss Elizabeth Bultitude, after travelling thirty years, was superannuated in 1862, and died in 1890.

Foremost among this band of noble and devoted women is Sarah Kirkland. Her name is inextricably

interwoven with the work of the pioneers in Cheshire, Nottingham, Derby and Yorkshire. She has the honour of being the first female travelling preacher. The work she did in opening new places and holding Camp Meetings is very remarkable, and it is interesting to note that during four years of continuous itinerating in the roughest country, she was never insulted or rudely treated. The only portrait we have of her was taken when she was an old woman. Spare and frail she is, but in the long oval face, with its prominent nose and orator's mouth, framed in its coal-scuttle bonnet and white frills, we discern something of the mingled dignity and gentleness which enabled her to itinerate as a maiden, still in her teens, unharmed among the roughest of the population of that lawless time.

Born at Mercaston, or "Hell's Green," in 1794, her first religious impressions were received from a visit of the sainted William Bramwell, who preached in her father's house, and whose prayer moved her to tears. When, in 1811, Hugh Bourne spoke to her on the subject of religion on visiting her father's house, the early impressions were revived, and ere long she found peace. From William Clowes she received her first class ticket, and by him she was led into the blessing of full salvation.

Two years later she began to preach, her first convert being a gipsy, who afterwards constituted himself her herald whenever she preached in the

neighbourhood of the roving band. And he was no formal herald, but like the woman of Samaria proclaimed what God had done for him through this woman's preaching, and invited the people to come and hear her for themselves. Not long before beginning to preach she lost her father and two brothers by the small-pox. Her orphaned condition appealed to Robert Winfield, a small farmer at Ambaston, who fostered and directed the gifts which he discerned she possessed.

It required no common courage and no ordinary impulse to enable a woman to become a preacher in those days. It was not merely that the difficulties which faced the pioneers were such as to test severely their fortitude and physical endurance; but in the case of a woman there was the disability of sex. It was not considered a woman's place to preach, and it would hardly be true to say even of the Wesleyans that they tolerated them. "Balaam was converted by the preaching of an ass," said a certain preacher in the course of a funeral sermon for a departed President of the Conference; "and Peter by the crowing of a cock, and our lamented brother by the preaching of a woman; God often uses strange instruments." All this prejudice, popular and ecclesiastical, must be borne in mind if we would realise the personal qualities and the passion for evangelism which made Sarah Kirkland a travelling preacher.

Her career is one of the veritable romances of

our Church—a Church whose history is steeped in romance. We follow her steps with astonishment; albeit to trace her itinerary is no easy matter. We find her in widely separated places, and overflowing congregations attend her services, often with striking results. Here the keeper of a disreputable spirit shop listens behind the door, and forthwith renouncing his evil trade becomes a local preacher of great acceptance and usefulness; there a society is raised up in a few days. This girl, not yet out of her teens, missions Derby and Nottingham, where subsequently powerful circuits were raised up.

It was in 1816 that she became a regular travelling preacher, and Hugh Bourne bears testimony to the fact that she was "managing and useful," and that she "laboured at large with great credit and success," raising the character of women preachers. Returning from the great Camp Meeting in Nottingham Forest to Derby, a horseman overtook her with an urgent summons to preach at Bulwell. That evening saw her addressing a large congregation from a cart in a field. Within a month sixty persons had joined the Society. Later in the year she held a Camp Meeting there, and preached to an immense multitude. Before the close of 1816 she missioned the colliery village of Ilkeston, where by an exceptionally rough population she was well received, and a marvellous reformation followed. At Hucknall Torkard, where John Harrison had

failed, Sarah Kirkland succeeded in forming a society.

Afterwards Sarah Kirkland became Sarah Harrison, the wife of a travelling preacher, in which capacity she still continued her missionary labours, opening new places and witnessing great revivals. To judge by the portrait of her in old age, there was nothing masculine in this pioneer preacheress, but we can faintly realise, as we scan the lineaments of that aged face, the overwhelming conviction and the passionate earnestness with which she besought men to "flee from the wrath to come."

While devoted women played so large a part in the work of preaching in the early days, we have very little recorded of their labours. This is chiefly due to the fact that they themselves left no written account of their work. If they kept journals they have not been preserved, and thus a fascinating chapter in our history has been largely lost. Of Mary Porteous, however, we have more extensive records. Her intellectual gifts and literary ability enabled her not only to preach with such power as to compel good judges to rank her amongst the most distinguished female preachers of all ages, but fitted her for making such records of her labours and experiences as led to the writing of her "Life," and the book was sold by thousands, to the moral and spiritual advantage of its readers.

Converted in her girlhood, she associated herself with the chapel, and, like Hester Ann Rogers, was

subjected to severe persecution on this account by her mother, who frequently compelled her to go without breakfast and dinner on the Sabbath. In order to be able to record her Christian experience, she learned to read and write. Toil and poverty and privation marked her early womanhood and married life through no fault of her own. She earned a precarious living for some years by keeping a school and taking in needlework. Entire consecration to, and dependence upon, God, may be said to have been the keynote of her life. She has left on record her vow of dedication, which is beautifully phrased, and reveals the possession of rare literary ability.

The answers to prayer which often brought her deliverance when she and her children were reduced to the last extremity of want, are among the most striking on record. One instance must suffice. Placed upon the plan as a local preacher, her gifts and graces and usefulness soon brought her a call to our ministry. She spread the matter before the Lord, saying: "Let not man have his way in this matter; let not me have mine; let not Satan have his; but let Thy will be done in me and by me in all things." The Divine will was made clear, and she consented. She owed £1 5s. for rent, but believed God would provide the needed cash. A gentleman soon afterwards called at her door, and said: "Did I not hear you preach the other Sabbath?" and then put into her hands the exact

sum needed. He immediately departed, and she never knew who he was. For the cold weather and rough mountain journeys of her new sphere of toil she needed her wardrobe replenishing. The list of articles required she spread before the Lord, and soon after there came two parcels containing every article she had named in her list. Let it be understood that these are only a few samples of the wonderful answers to prayer this devoted woman was constantly receiving.

The story of her toils and triumphs as a travelling preacher is in many respects the most romantic on record. She often walked twelve miles and preached three times on the Sabbath. On foot, through drifting snow, across turbulent streams and over high mountains, she travelled in eight weeks no less than two hundred and sixty miles. A classic passage often quoted from her journal describes the circumstances under which she opened a Mission at Wigton. It reveals her essentially a woman, and, withal, a saint and a true heroine :

" I read this in Mr. Wesley's Journal : ' I rode on to Wigton, and preached at the Market Cross.' I thought, the Lord help me, I have to stand there to-morrow, under vastly other circumstances. This frequently crossed my mind as I took my solitary journey to the place, sitting down occasionally by the roadside to muse on what I was about to do. I thought Mr. Wesley was a gentleman and had a carriage. His very appearance would command

respect and attention; and when he had declared his message, if destitute of friends, he could provide for himself lodgings. But what am I? A poor 'Ranter preacher,' so termed, and a woman too. What a look I shall have to go into a strange town, where I am entirely unknown, and thus publicly exhibit myself to preach. What can I think but that the people will laugh at me? And then, where shall I get my lodging? Possibly in some improper place or other. As I thus sat musing I cried to the Lord for help. That passage came powerfully to my mind: 'When I sent you without purse or scrip, lacked ye anything?' This encouraged me; I went on my way; arrived at the place; was providentially guided to a house where, although a stranger, I was kindly received. The woman made me tea, and when her husband came home she got him and two others to announce the preaching and accompany me to the Cross."

It is unfortunate that we have so little information in regard to most of the early female preachers. In some cases their names only survive as having been the instrument of some notable conversion. There is Miss Parrott, for example, of whom little is known beyond the fact that it was under her preaching that a famous family came under the influence of Primitive Methodism. If Thomas Kendall was converted under the preaching of William Braithwaite to such an extent that the

hair rose up upon his head and displaced his hat, it was under a sermon preached by Miss Hannah Parrott at Crosby that he entered into Gospel liberty. He was standing against the doorstead of a barn while listening to this memorable sermon. He afterwards became a leader and chapel steward. Of his ten sons, six became preachers of the Gospel, one of whom was President of the Conference and father of the Rev. H. B. Kendall, B.A., for nine years Connexional Editor and the author of the History of the Primitive Methodist Church.

It should never be forgotten that it was a woman who first missioned the town of Hull. Jane Brown was one of the fruits of the great Nottingham revival of 1817. In the latter part of 1818 she went out to travel, for we have the following record from Hugh Bourne, dated September 24th of that year: "Jane Brown begins to travel. I took the opportunity to give her a charge. I trust she will do well." Her portrait has been handed down to us, and suggests a tall, slender figure, an oval face, slightly Roman nose, and hair neatly parted over the forehead to form something like a right angle. Her name is associated with Canaan Street Chapel, Nottingham, as the first female to preach in that famous sanctuary. She was sent by Nottingham circuit to labour in South Lincolnshire. While there she was induced to visit Hull. On her way she preached from a stool at Hessle, and again on the following Sunday in the old Penitentiary, near

High Flags, Wincolmlee, Hull. William Clowes frankly admitted that Jane Brown preceded him in Hull, and records how that on the first Sunday he spent in the town he heard her preach in the afternoon.

In 1820 Jane Brown became the wife of George Nicholson, a Lincolnshire farmer, who also did famous pioneer work in association with John Oxtoby and Robert Coultas. Thomas Champness makes mention of Mr. Nicholson as a wonderful man to talk, and who could get a congregation easier than most men. He often heard him in Manchester, where he laboured as a hired local preacher, and many years later found his name fragrant in Louth. After her marriage, Jane Brown still continued to preach, and on one occasion delivered the Gospel message in Horncastle market-place to listening thousands. But it is the three or four weeks spent unofficially at Hull, in which she was preparing the way for one greater than herself, and who was to achieve such marvellous success there, that constitutes her chief title to fame. So little do we know which piece of our work will be best remembered by posterity.

Another female preacher who laboured in the days of the pioneers in the north was Jane Ansdale. She has been described by competent judges as a woman of more than extraordinary ability and power. Her name is linked with that of Thomas Batty in the great work which founded Primitive

Methodism in Weardale. Her first service was to have been held in the open air, but the weather proved too unfavourable, and it is not a little remarkable that the use of the Wesleyan chapel was offered for the service. Wesleyan chapels were not usually open to us in those days; we were too often regarded as poachers on ecclesiastical preserves.

At this service William Dent, afterwards to become an able and devoted minister, was present, and has left on record an account of the preacher. It is evident he was much impressed by her appearance, her delivery, and her manner, all of which seem to have been greatly in her favour. Her text was: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another," &c., Mal. iii. 16, 17. Mr. Dent, who was disposed sometimes to be a little severe as a critic, and in the then state of public opinion in relation to female preachers might have been expected to be specially so, was most favourably impressed with the treatment of the subject, and speaks of the service as a good introduction to the work which followed. He states also that Jane Ansdale's subsequent ministrations were equally effective. Through her J. D. Muschamp, a name afterwards well known in Primitive Methodist circles through all that region, was convinced of sin. Soon afterwards he found peace, and not only fixed up his barn as the first preaching place, but took an active part in securing the first chapel.

Jane Ansdale afterwards became Mrs. Suddards, the wife of Dr. Suddards, rector of an Episcopal Church in Philadelphia; but she never forgot her early associations with Primitive Methodism. She was not like the Israelites, who could not sing the Lord's songs in a strange land, but with her husband would occasionally hold a meeting of two in the church, at which free prayer could be offered and the dear old "Ranter hymns" sung.

No more striking evidence of the power of religion and the strength and steadiness of character it produced could be desired than is afforded by the manner in which many of these early female preachers conducted themselves. One is amazed to think of a young girl of sixteen, like Elizabeth Johnson, going out to travel, remembering the steadiness and correctness of deportment that would be demanded of her in such a sphere. This was in 1824, in the early pioneer days. For four years she was a travelling preacher, labouring in South Wales, Wrockwardine Wood, Preston, Ramsor, Darlaston and Burton-on-Trent, and then, apparently, was induced to enter the married state and cease from travelling. Not a few of the early female ministers married ministers, and so continued in some sense in the work to which they had given themselves. If, however, Elizabeth Johnson married a layman, she remained a useful local preacher to the day of her death in 1860; and it is not a little remarkable that three of her sons

became Primitive Methodist Mayors of Walsall, who counted, however, their mother's life their greatest honour. One of them, Alderman Theophilus Brownhill, recently passed away, after rendering splendid service to the church and to his native town, and sustaining before his fellows a character, as his successor in the mayoralty testified, "as high as human being could attain." Mrs. Brownhill's husband was a local preacher for sixty years, and her son, just referred to, a class leader and local preacher for forty years.

Another Elizabeth—the Marys and Elizabeths were numerous in those days—who did notable pioneer work was Elizabeth Smith. She has been described as one of the most attractive and picturesque figures in our annals. She was, apparently, sent out from Ludlow, and commissioned to carry the evangel as a pioneer to Radnorshire. The instructions she received from her superintendent afford us an interesting glimpse of the apostolic simplicity of the times. Putting into the hands of the maiden a map of the road, he gave her certain verbal directions, and then added a word of caution, which seems to have been needless. "You will have to raise your own salary," he said, "two guineas a quarter." "Oh, I did not know I was to have anything," was the delightful reply. After travelling the whole of the first day she found herself at nightfall on a lonely common. It seems rather to have been a piece of wide moorland, for

there were treacherous peat-holes all round, the kind of places known in Scotland as "shoogybogs," deep, slimy, and capable of quickly engulphing the unwary traveller. Recognising her danger, the young preacheress hesitated to proceed. Ascending a bit of rising ground she began to sing:

"Jesu, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high."

The sacred song was borne on the wings of the wind to a cottage standing on the edge of the moor, and one of the inmates hearing it set out with a lantern to learn what it meant. Guided by the voice he reached the place where she was standing, and the maiden found shelter in the cottage, which proved to be the very house to which she had been directed. "Was it not," said they all, "the hand of the Lord that guided our sister and preserved her?"

If few, the glimpses we have of Elizabeth Smith are at any rate suggestive of the work she did and the character she revealed. We see her walking up the avenue to the barn at Ramsbury, in Wilts., where she has to conduct a service. She moves along, singing with her accustomed sweetness and power. She had discovered by this time that the magic of her voice could accomplish other things than merely guide the steps of those who came to deliver her from perplexity and danger. There is

danger here, but of another kind. The path is lined with a hostile mob, armed with stones, eggs, and missiles of various kinds. But not one of these left their hands. As the ringleader looks at this fearless maiden and listens to her sweet voice, he is strangely moved, and his fell purpose dies within him. Turning to his followers, he said, in a tone of menace and authority: "Not one of you shall touch that woman"; and she, passing through the midst of them unscathed, went her way.

If these women were in no way indebted to their physical proportions for their immunity from molestation in a rude age and amid often a lawless population, there were others whose strength and stature were at least impressive. Mary Crossley was not only six feet high—a stature which makes a woman look very tall even amongst men of fair height—but proportionately big otherwise. When we say otherwise, we refer not merely to matters physical; for the conditions amid which she had at one period of her ministry to carry on her work caused many a strong man's heart to become as water. He would have faced a crowd of angry people, but it was another thing to face the cholera. Hull, in 1832, was visited with the cholera, and the terror of it lay upon the town like a pall. Mary Crossley was one of the travelling preachers in Hull that year. We had only one chapel as yet in the town, Mill Street, the very quarter most seriously affected by the cholera. It was a time

when men's thoughts were naturally turned to religion, and full advantage was taken of the opportunity. Not only at night, but at early morning, services were held in the chapel. But it was in the open street that the most weird and impressive services were held. There tar-barrels were lighted, and near them Mary Crossley would take her stand, after the chapel service was over, and hold forth the Word of Life in the hope that some one who had not ventured within the sanctuary might be arrested and saved. Old Mill Street has seen many strange sights in its time, but that must have been one of the strangest of them all.

They made big women apparently in those days, in spite of the adverse conditions amid which the masses of the people were reared. Another female travelling preacher was Mary Birks, who also stood six feet in height. She was clearly a woman of exceptional ability and force of character, as may be inferred from the fact that when stationed at Grimsby she was thought suitable to go as a missionary to the United States. The importance of the mission and the desirability of securing Mary Birks as the missionary led to William Clowes himself being appointed to visit her, so that he might interview her on the question. He, however, failed in his errand, for the lady declined to go. She travelled for some nineteen years. Even when she began to find the long journeys too much for her strength, she was unwilling to give up the work,

and petitioned the Hull Quarterly Meeting to buy her an ass on which to ride to her appointments. The sight of so tall a lady on a donkey would certainly have been comical. Whether this influenced the Board, or they hesitated about setting so startling a precedent, is not recorded; but in conveying their decision to Miss Birks they graciously informed her that she was at liberty to borrow a pony of a friend whenever she required it. One wonders whether she felt disposed to thank them for nothing. In those days friends with ponies were rather scarce; and in any case, it surely did not require an official resolution to enable her to go that length.

Another of the stalwarts among the early female travelling preachers was Miss Mary C. Buck, who commenced her ministry in the old Burland circuit in 1837. It is said that in stature, voice, appearance, as well as in the strength and robustness of her intellect, she was more masculine than feminine. When she retired from the active ministry she still "travelled," but in the wider sense. She was in great request as a preacher on special occasions, such as chapel openings and anniversaries, and many are still living who had the privilege of listening to her remarkable sermons. Parkinson Milson described her as a woman of extraordinary intellectual capacity, of sound and discriminating judgment, and possessing a clear and comprehensive understanding of Divine truth. There is still one

of her published sermons extant, the subject of which is "Wrestling Jacob." Some years before her death she was prostrated by a paralytic stroke, and became the mere wreck of her former self. She who had once gloried in her great strength was constrained to say: "Poor Polly is a caged bird now; her wings are clipped." Pointing to her portrait on the wall, representing her as she was in her prime, she remarked with tears: "What a contrast between it and me now. But I believe I shall be myself again in the future." Through the influence of Drs. W. and S. Antliff, the Conference of 1866 granted her a special annuity of £20.

For the last time, in 1890, the name of a superannuated female travelling preacher appeared in the Conference Minutes. This was the name of Elizabeth Bultitude, who was superannuated as long ago as 1862. She was converted at a Camp Meeting held on Mousehold Heath, Norwich, in 1826, conducted by Samuel Atterby. She entered the ministry in 1832, and travelled for thirty years as a regular minister. She began at Norwich and ended at Faringdon, and between these two stations were fifteen others on which she had faithfully toiled. On the famous Mattishall station she laboured in conjunction with Robert Key, and as we have seen these were days of excessive toil and much persecution. On one station she records: "What money I had would not allow me to dress smart enough for the people."

Some idea of the endurance and devotion of Elizabeth Bultitude may be gathered from the fact that during her thirty years ministry she only missed two appointments, one when there was a flooding rain and the other a heavy thunderstorm. It is significant that these were out-door services, to which, under the circumstances, she did not deem it wise to go. She travelled thousands on thousands of miles, often preaching five and six times a week, three and sometimes five times on the Sabbath, and frequently visiting and praying with from ten to forty families a day.

Not a few still recall Elizabeth Bultitude in the later years of her superannuation—her large, round, rubicund face in poke bonnet; her ejaculatory prayers with their many and fervent repetitions, and the peculiarities which were no doubt acquired in her years of travelling. Female travelling preachers required to be extremely circumspect, and even in her later years Elizabeth Bultitude would not allow any man to speak to her in chapel in her own pew: she would request him to go into the next seat. Then she had no taste whatever for the things which fill the hearts of ordinary women. Nothing would induce her to rock a cradle, however much the baby cried. But her devotion to a drunken, good-for-nothing, cockle-selling brother of hers was extraordinary. Her attachment to the Quarterly Review was exemplary for a superannuated preacher. What tales she could

tell of the heroes and characters of the early days, and as she wound up her narrative she would add: "Now he's gone," and after an interval, "to glory, I hope," as if there was always some doubt about the matter. She completed eighty-one years of earthly pilgrimage, and then fell on sleep.

Then a host of women preachers might be named who married ministers and continued, as occasion offered, to preach the Gospel and aid their husbands in the work of the ministry. There was Mrs. Hallam, the wife of Christopher Hallam, and the mother of Rev. John Hallam. There is not a little romance associated with her courtship and marriage, for her family were strict Church people, and horrified that one of their number should turn Dissenter. But she was true both to her Methodist principles and to the young Primitive Methodist minister who had wooed and won her affections, and when she found that her parents would not give their consent, she married without it, the late venerable Jesse Ashworth being one of the witnesses. She had the joy of seeing her parents and every member of her large family become Dissenters—not Methodists, but Congregationalists.

The bride of this runaway marriage was privileged to begin her married life on twelve shillings a week. Moved by the Conference of 1839 to North Shields, the young couple and a baby girl travelled by coach and found themselves stranded, as soon as they

had got well across the backbone of England, for lack of money. Christopher Hallam had to leave his wife and child and travel on foot to Bradford to borrow the necessary cash for the completion of the journey. In North Shields John Hallam was born.

Later we find Christopher Hallam in Edinburgh. He decided some new departure must be made, and taking one of the largest halls available, he announced that Mrs. Hallam would preach every Sunday evening. This in the very seat of Presbyterianism! It was scandalous! A woman preach in Edinburgh! No such thing had ever been heard of. But preach she did, and defended her right to do so. Curiosity drew the people, and soon advertising was unnecessary; crowds were turned away, unable to find admission.

The head of a city firm, bigoted but curious, went to hear the preacheress. Next time he took his wife with him. Then he invited the lady and her husband and family to take tea at his house. This became a weekly institution, and a friendship was formed which only death severed.

In Glasgow the Hallams found things in a desperate condition. There was neither house nor furniture for the missionary. A room was offered them, unplastered, unceiled, and with no floor but the earth. Then a house was taken, and the Missionary Committee asked to furnish it. The response was a five pound note. Mrs. Hallam preached in

Glasgow with success, and the cause was saved. Among her converts was the late Mrs. McDougall, wife of Mr. James McDougall, who as one who befriended the late Hugh Gilmore, finds mention in that true work of fiction, "Hugh Morrigill." Though not a travelling preacher, Mrs. Hallam was known throughout the northern circuits as a woman of exceptional gifts and usefulness. She frequently preached in all the circuits where her lot was cast, and with much acceptance. Colin Campbell McKechnie claimed for her a "wide intellectual outlook," and a mental equipment that would have been creditable to any minister of the Gospel.

But in some respects the most romantic story of this kind is that of Mrs. Ann Hirst, the wife of the Rev. John Hirst. She belonged to a Quaker family, the Howsons of Darlington. In her teens, in quest of peace, she became associated with our people, and was bitterly persecuted by her family, who would fetch her out of the little chapel. Scouts used to be stationed to warn her of the approach of her brother, and as he entered one door of the chapel she would leave by another to avoid a scene. But when she and the young minister, Rev. J. Hirst, fell in love, the persecution became bitter indeed; the idea of her marriage with one "outside the Society" and belonging to the class who "traffic in the Word of God as paid ministers," was intolerable. "Wilt thou demean thyself to live

on the doles of the poorest of the poor ? " indignantly demanded her mother. At any cost the thing must be prevented, and so the young Quakeress turned Methodist was imprisoned for six weeks in her own home. Then the fair prisoner grew desperate, and escaping through the cellar grate took the stage coach to York, thence to Leeds—no small venture for a girl of twenty-one—to which town Mr. Hirst had been moved. A special license was procured, and the two were married at the earliest date possible. Alston, then a Branch of Hull Circuit, was their first station, and the young couple resided at Nenthead, a little mining village among the Northumberland and Cumberland moors, or fells, as they are locally called. There was a great snow-storm during their first winter, and Mr. Hirst was "storm-stayed" away from home. The little society, then in its infancy, was without a preacher, and rather than abandon the service, Mrs. Hirst read a sermon. Then she began to expound, and revealed such surprising gifts that her name was soon placed upon the plan as a preacher. Meanwhile her family had sent a special messenger with a letter of "disownment," and her mother cut her off absolutely till within a few months of death.

Mrs. Hirst became very popular as a "special" preacher. She had been educated at Ackworth, the famous Quaker school, which stood her in good stead as a preacher, and many in later years

testified that she was the ablest woman preacher they had ever heard. Her speech and bearing were those of a cultured lady. She possessed the richness of expression often found among the Quakers, and a vivid directness of speech, which, joined to great strength of conviction, made her a powerful speaker. Surely the fire of the Primitive Methodist, blending with the quaint Scriptural phrasing of the Quaker, must have made a rare combination. And in other respects she revealed the same curious blend. She retained the quaint dress and speech of the Quaker, and she would not sing. For sixty years she preached the Gospel as the Spirit gave her utterance, and she and her husband made the unique record of one hundred and thirty-six years' ministry. "You have accepted a travelling preacher with nine children," said the officials of Derby station, reproachfully, to their delegate on his return from the District Meeting. "Yes," was the prompt reply, "but I have got you two travelling preachers." This devoted woman had twenty years' service in Sheffield as a Bible woman after superannuation. She saw nearly all her family become devoted Primitive Methodists, and her grandsons, J. H. Hirst and T. Graham are in its ministry to-day.

Even if we had the necessary information, space would fail to tell of all the noble women who as preachers did much for the spread of Primitive Methodism in the early days—of Sarah Spittle, one

of the pioneers of Shrewsbury ; of Ann Brownsword, one of the pioneers in Manchester ; of Ann Goodwin, who laboured and suffered in the old Brinkworth District.

As we look with curious interest, yet with reverence withal, at the portraits of these honourable women, or such of them as we happily possess, we see nothing but womanliness there. We discover gentleness, kindliness, sympathy, combined in many cases with an unmistakable firmness and strength of purpose. These white caps, with their frilled borders, revive tender and beautiful memories of our own mothers ; and the coal-scuttle bonnets strike us at once as odd and familiar. If these mothers and sisters of an earlier time dressed with quaint simplicity, it was not without a good deal of cost to themselves. Sometimes it may have been a mistaken cost, but of that they must be the judges. It amuses us to read how, as the result of the great revival under Thomas Batty, the Weardale milliners found the elaborate caps they had been accustomed to fashion quite out of vogue, and wisely set themselves to meet the new taste by making "Ranter caps." But we experience something more than amusement, a pity as at something tragic, when we read of how the rich and splendid tresses which constituted Anna Taylor's woman's crown of glory, were submitted to the abhorred shears, the assembled saints triumphantly singing the while :

"Lo the knife I gladly take,
Glory, hallelujah!
Bind my Isaac to the stake,
Glory, hallelujah!"

Only a few of the honourable women, who as preachers and pioneers carried forward the standard of Primitive Methodism, can find mention here. Behind them is a great army of devout sisters who toiled in quietness and obscurity for the Connexion they loved so well. All honour to their memory!

CONTENTS.

	Page
Early Primitive Methodists and Miracle.	161
Ranter and Rotten Egg Period	162
How the Baser Sort were Stirred Up	162
Physical Courage on an Empty Stomach	163
Walking Feats of Messrs. W. Garner, Proctor, Wallace, and Lister	163
Joseph Reynolds and Cold Cabbage	163
Elizabeth Elliott Drowned	164
Joseph Spoor and the Footpad	164
Noisy Forms of Persecution	165
The "Faringdon Russells"	166
Thomas Russell Thrice Washes His Clothes	166
William Lockwood Drenched with Fire Engine	166
George Wallace Drenched with Bullock's Blood	167
John Garner Nearly Murdered	167
W. G. Bellham "Jonathan Barneyed"	168
Widespread "Boycotting"	168
Legal Persecution	169
Tables Turned on a Persecutor	170
Pioneers Thrust into Filthy Prisons	171
George Stansfield Imprisoned Seven Days	171
Ride and Bishop Imprisoned	171
Thomas Russell Sentenced to Three Months Imprisonment	172
Jeremiah Gilbert Fifteen Times Before the Magistrates	172

CHAPTER VIII.

OF ITS PERSECUTIONS.

IT was Robert Louis Stevenson who taught us to see the romance of daily life, the sudden gleams from a brighter world illumining the dull and leavening the commonplace. It is pretty certain, however, that the early Primitive Methodists had comparatively little perception of any such quality in association with their work. They were ever on the King's business, which was too urgent to admit of any clear consciousness of the romantic elements of their life. Severe toil, much hardship, sometimes actual want of the necessaries of life, did not make for romance. Yet the dull and commonplace was, with them, continually lit up with sudden "gleams from a brighter world." To them the age of miracle and Providential interposition was not past; these were things of almost daily experience. God was to them the great reality of the universe, and all they did was undertaken in humble

dependence upon Him. But for this they could never have faced the tremendous difficulties of their work.

Not the smallest among these difficulties was the bitter persecution they were called upon to encounter. If God gave them the hundred-fold, it was verily "with persecutions." Primitive Methodism has had several clearly defined periods in its history, and one amongst them has been well described by our historian as "the Ranter and Rotten-egg Period." This was the period when the people called Ranters were everywhere spoken against; when their threatened irruption in a parish aroused in the parson and the squire something akin to dismay, followed by an angry determination to keep them out by fair means or foul. A very common method of accomplishing this was to stir up the baser sort to give the intruders a violent reception. This was an easy matter. The baser sort are always liable to entertain a prejudice against anything new, and if the novelty has to do with religion, of which they confessedly know nothing, they are all the more ready to range themselves against it. It affords them the unwonted luxury of indulging their innate brutality with the consciousness that they are doing God service.

But to realise all that persecution meant to the pioneers, it must be borne in mind that it often had to be faced after a long journey on foot and with an

empty stomach. Physical courage is sometimes a good deal a matter of fulness of bread and abounding vitality. But these men and women drew their courage from another source. Their journeys were often excessively long and their fare of the most scanty dimensions. John Garner would walk thirty-seven miles and preach twice; Elizabeth Rowbotham twenty miles on the Saturday to be ready for Sunday, and preach on arriving at her destination. In twenty-one years William Garner walked nearly forty-five thousand miles. Hugh Bourne's record would probably far surpass that. Numbers fell out of the ranks and died early, as the result of this excessive toil. Men like Thomas Proctor in Herefordshire and William Wallace amid the bleak wilds of Northumberland, though by no means weaklings at the outset, were brought to the grave within a year or two by their hardships, toils, and excessive privations. Enormous powers of endurance were demanded to perform feats like those of William Lister, who in two months missioned a dozen villages in Northumberland, and often made his breakfast and dinner by the brookside on a pennyworth of bread bought at the village shop. And yet he can add to his record the simple words: "The prosperity of the work sweetened all." Joseph Reynolds travelled nearly thirty miles with only a penny cake to eat. Then he preached to a vast congregation of two thousand, afterwards making

his supper of cold cabbage, and slept under a haystack.

To face persecution and danger after such journeys, and amid such privations, demanded uncommon courage, and the deeds of daring performed by the pioneers of Primitive Methodism are more deserving of honour than many that have been rewarded with the Victoria Cross. And as may happen with those who face danger, these heroes of ours sometimes met with death. Elizabeth Elliott was on her way to preach, and had to cross the river Virniew, which was swollen by the rush of water from the Welsh mountains. The ferry-boat was upset, and she was drowned. On their way to their appointments Messrs. Branfoot and Hewson travelled, as was usual, along the Hetton waggon-way, and were run down and killed. The pioneers were often lost on moorlands, and not infrequently in danger of robbers. A wonderful Providence protected them in such circumstances. Perhaps they were often regarded as too muscular-looking to be lightly tackled, or as not being worth robbing. It is certain that many of them would have been little disposed to practise the doctrine of merely passive resistance. A "muscular Christianity" would have been more to their taste, and, like Joseph Spoor, when set upon by a foot-pad between Harrogate and Knaresboro', they would have been victorious.

In not a few cases, however, so weary and

exhausted were they in their long journeys, that the robbers would have found them an easy and unresisting prey. Such was the condition of Robert Key and John Britton when returning from missioning. Their work had involved a journey of between twenty and thirty miles, and no man gave unto them. "I feel so faint and hungry," said one of them, "I could eat almost anything." Happily it was not robbers they stumbled against, but a handkerchief containing two loaves of bread. It may safely be assumed that that meal was one of the sweetest they ever ate.

But the severest trial was to be called upon to contend with rowdy opposition and positive violence when exhausted by long and hungry journeys. The less brutal form of opposition was a mere attempt to drown the singing and preaching by noise. The noise varied, from the ringing of the church bells—so violently that they were sometimes actually cracked,—and the rattling of tin pans and kettles, to the beating of drums, the blowing of horns, and the noise and clamour of a dog fight. But the opposition often took a far more aggressive form. Mobs have always been fond of throwing missiles. In the early days stones were generally plentiful and handy, and at Lincoln William Clowes was wounded with one. But occasionally a little variety was introduced. Thus, at Market Rasen, shot was slung. At Faringdon Thomas Russell and his helpers were pelted with

potatoes. Two sacks of tubers were squandered in this way, and at a period when people had enough to do to get potatoes to eat. But romance has been woven even round the humble potatoe, for it is related that a great part of these missiles were collected by some thrifty person, who planted them, and the produce became known as "Faringdon Russells."

But the favourite missiles were rotten eggs, so finely expressive of hatred and contempt. In one day Thomas Russell was so besmeared with rotten eggs and filth that he thrice sat down by the side of canal or brook or pond, and taking off his clothes, washed them. Resuming his wet garments, he continued his mission in another place. But he did not shake off the dust of his feet for a testimony against these villages that had thus maltreated him: he washed his garments, and on the first opportunity returned with the Gospel message. In the face of some of the bitterest persecutions endured by the pioneers, he persevered, and at the end of three years he had enrolled, as members of the Primitive Methodist Connexion on that very ground, no fewer than 1,280 members.

Instigated by the clergyman, the missionary at Newark, William Lockwood, was alternately drenched with a garden hose and with the fire-engine. Some watermen standing by interposed, and with their knives rendered the hose useless. When the clergyman prosecuted them for this, it

transpired that he had authorised the use of the fire-engine, and it was decided by the magistrates that the man who called the tune should pay the piper. Another missionary, George Wallis, was in Hampshire drenched with bullock's blood; and at Belper the redoubtable John Benton narrowly escaped the same fate. His assailant slipped upon the ladder he had ascended, and the blood intended for Benton was precipitated upon himself. These cases are only typical of what took place in various parts of the country.

But instances are not wanting of physical violence with murderous intent. At Sow, in 1819, John Garner was driven out of the village, after standing a siege for some time in the house where he had intended to preach, and pelted with stones, rotten eggs, and filth. Then he was seized, and, while his mouth was held open, attempts were made to pour sludge down his throat. "Kill the devil!" was the cry, and immediately he was knocked down, kicked and beaten, and dragged to a pond, where it was the evident intention of the mob to drown him. At this moment of peril he was strangely enough rescued by one of the vilest of his persecutors and escaped. The garments torn violently from his person were so ragged and tattered, that they afterwards served as a scarecrow in one of the village gardens.

At Daventry, W. G. Bellham was greeted with cries of: "No bacon preachers!" "Church and

King for ever!" He was seized by the mob, and, still clinging to the chair on which he had stood up to preach, he was carried up the street and back again. Then a group of men "Jonathan Barneyed" him, as a couple of costermongers roll oranges backward and forward in a bag. All his efforts to get out of the circle were in vain, and at last he was so battered and hustled that he fell, and fully expected to be trodden to death by his tormentors. But he was singularly preserved, and escaped with the loss of his hat and one lap of his coat.

But more cruel than any of these methods of persecution was that of boycotting, though the name had not then been invented. All over the land were men and women who were made to feel that religious liberty, in the true sense, did not exist. To countenance or harbour the Primitive Methodists was to risk the displeasure of their social superiors: the squire, the parson, and perhaps the farmer. To hazard that was to hazard their employment and their home, and sundry pains and penalties which petty tyrants know so well how to inflict. To keep this new and aggressive form of Dissent out of the parish, it was deemed necessary to prohibit any one from allowing services to be held in his house. The man who disregarded the prohibition was evicted. Even to shelter the missionary or give him hospitality was to risk the loss of employment. In hundreds of cases the screw was mercilessly applied in this way to

labourers and even to tenant farmers. The very shopkeepers joined the boycott in the case of Thomas Proctor at Cwm, refusing to sell him food, and for days his chief sustenance was only what he could gather off the hedges. In Berkshire the preachers sometimes had to wander on the Downs all night, after preaching, having nowhere to sleep. In some cases the people were forbidden even to look out of their doors or windows when the missionary visited the village, and the father of Mr. L. L. Morse, M.P., once found a village in consequence which seemed completely deserted. It might have been swept by plague, so silent did it appear, with every door and window closed.

The present generation has no idea of the lengths to which religious intolerance and persecution went in the days of our fathers. Dressed in a little brief authority, the squire, the parson, and the lawyer constantly invoked the aid of the law in their attempts to exterminate this new form of Dissent. That they often utterly failed to secure a conviction is evidence not of the fine sense of justice that prevailed at the time, so much as of the paltry and contemptible charges they trumped up against the missionaries. Lengthy reports, culled frequently from the local press, are still extant of these fruitless attempts at repression. Amusing altercations often took place between the missionary and the magistrate, in which the magistrate almost invariably was worsted. Joseph Spoor at Ripon, W. G.

Bellham at Litcham, John Chambers and others at Yarmouth, are familiar instances. Obstructing the thoroughfare, although only half-a-dozen persons might be present, and preaching without a license, were common charges. Finding themselves in a difficulty, the magistrates often offered to dismiss the accused if he would promise not to preach there again. The reply of Mr. Chambers at Yarmouth is typical: "I will preach again as soon as I am liberated, if I am imprisoned forty times." W. G. Bellham's reply, when threatened with the treadmill if he came again to preach, was more mildly but not less firmly expressed: "We shall come again, sir, not to offend any one, but to do good in God's name." The worst feature of these temporary imprisonments was that the missionaries were often thrust for the time into some filthy prison; the best was that they invariably awakened public sympathy and tended to the furtherance of the cause. Occasionally the tables were turned in a very amusing fashion on the persecutors, as at Lexham Hall, where an irascible magistrate, badgered on every side, said to the clergyman who demanded, on the dismissal of the prisoner, who was to pay the eight and ninepence expenses: "Pay it yourself, bringing your fellows here."

But the missionaries were not always as fortunate as this. If in numberless cases all over the country their arrest only involved a temporary detention, in about a score of instances, on various charges,

often of the most flimsy character, they were convicted and imprisoned. In these later days Primitive Methodists, as Passive Resisters, have gained an acquaintance with police courts and prison cells, which might almost be described as "extensive and peculiar," and sometimes disagreeable; but their experiences, in comparison with those of the pioneers, might well be counted a pleasant diversion. The charges, too, which bring us now before the magistrates have from 1902 onwards been of a kind to confer honour rather than dishonour. It is impossible for them to stamp either the defendant or the convicted with the faintest taint of shame. It was widely different in the early part of the nineteenth century. Not only were the gaols often filthy, but the charges preferred were sometimes such as even an innocent man could not hear read out in court without a blush of shame, albeit the shame attached really to those who brought him there. So late as 1843 Mr. George Stansfield was charged with creating a nuisance in Margate streets, and committed to Dover gaol for seven days. So dignified and respectable was his appearance, that his fellow prisoners took him for a prison inspector. But the charges were usually flimsy and absurd.

It seems ridiculous for Messrs. Ride and Bishop, as has already been related, to be confined for twelve days in Winchester gaol until bail could be found for their appearance at the sessions, just

because they had the temerity to hold a missionary meeting in the open air at Micheldever; but it hardly seemed so to them, such were the times. But when we read of Thomas Russell, as described in another connection, being sentenced to three months' hard labour, in Abingdon House of Correction, on the paltry charge of selling a few books without a license, our indignation gets the better of our sense of humour. And when we find the prison doctor, whose name, alas, history has not preserved, called in to see the painful effects of this rigorous treatment upon a man accustomed to the active, open air life of a Primitive Methodist missionary, having nothing to say regarding the sick man, except: "Here he came to be punished, and here he must be punished," we feel we should have liked to see that doctor horsewhipped.

As early as 1821 we find Mr. Thomas Waller, a cotton spinner, committed to prison for three months simply for preaching in the streets of Ashton-under-Lyne. Probably Jeremiah Gilbert had the largest experience of this kind. In fifteen months he was taken before the magistrates no fewer than fifteen times, as he himself records, in June, 1820, for preaching the Gospel. At Eckington, in Derbyshire, standing on a chair, he was conducting a service, when the constable desired him to come down. Thrice Gilbert asked for the summons, and when it was not forthcoming, went on with his sermon. The constable then called for assistance,

but nobody responded. He then seized the preacher by the coat and pulled him down. Taking the constable's arm, Gilbert began to sing: "Christ, He sits on Zion's hill," and marched off to gaol. Looking through the bars of the prison, Gilbert perceived a crowd of people assembled, and exhorted them to flee from the wrath to come. Then he sang the praises of God within, while the people sang them outside, the gaol. "After some time the jailor came in, he records, and conversed with me. I persuaded him to go down on his knees in the prison and prayed with him. I afterwards wrote a part of my Journal, and at midnight I prayed and sang praises to God, and then retired to rest. I had blocked up the window as well as I could to keep out the cold, for it was a wet, damp, doleful prison. I had neither bed nor straw, but lay across some laths, and had a besom for my pillow. It was afterwards remarked to me that my prison was a deal worse than Derby dungeon; but the Lord converted it into a paradise." Such experiences he counted all joy. "I have been taken before the magistrates six or seven times for preaching the Gospel, but I have never lost anything but pride, shame, unbelief, hardness of heart, fear of man, love of the world, and prejudice of mind. I have always come out of prison more pure than I went in." Surely of such men the world was not worthy.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Adventure and Romance	175
The Adventure of the Local Preacher	175
Number of Pulpits Occupied by Local Preachers	176
Effectiveness of His Early School	177
The Most Picturesque Figure in Primitive Methodism	178
How Equipped for Their Work	178
Thomas Bateman's Character and Services	179
Romantic Journeys of Thomas Bateman	181
George Race's Intellectual Force and Pulpit Power	182
George Charlton's Life and Work	184
Every Circuit had Its Striking Figure	187
Statesmen Local Preachers	187
William Beckworth's Gifts and Services	187
Thomas Lawrence a Leader in Israel	188
The Humble, Devoted Host of Obscure Toilers	188
James Cripps a Specimen of Labour and Sacrifice	189

CHAPTER IX.

OF ITS LOCAL PREACHERS.

ADVENTURE is one of the elements of romance, and it will be readily admitted that the foregoing pages have indicated that this is abundantly furnished by the early history of Primitive Methodism. It ought, therefore, to be of special interest to the young. It has been said that Christianity began as one sublime, incredible adventure. A peasant, brought up in an obscure country town, and working till he is thirty years of age in a carpenter's shop, sets Himself to the great task of redeeming the world. And yet Western civilisation is based on the work of this obscure Galilean carpenter.

Similarly, though in an infinitely humbler degree, it was a great adventure on which the pioneers of Primitive Methodism entered, when they fared forth to evangelise rural England, and shape its social and political history. If this be true in regard to the itinerant preachers, it is scarcely less so of the local preachers. Throughout its history the

work of this Church has been done largely by men who toiled through the week at the plough, the forge, the bench, in the mine and at the market. If the early ministry might be counted by some unlearned—albeit that ministry has always possessed far more learning than its critics imagined—what might be expected of its local preachers whose time through the week was occupied with earning their living by the sweat of the brow? That this class should have undertaken to fill the pulpits of the Denomination to such a large extent was surely a great adventure. It is certain it so seemed to them, as with fear and trembling they set out after a week of hard toil on a journey of twenty or thirty miles to preach the Gospel. But it was not the long journey that filled them with such unwonted tremor, but the prospect, with such slender equipment of book learning, of holding forth the Word of Life. Yet even to-day, four out of every five pulpits in Primitive Methodism are occupied every Sunday by local preachers, and the proportion must have been vastly greater in the early days. How much the Denomination owes to its local preachers has never been, and never can be, adequately described. If we associate romance with the undertaking of the forlorn hope and apparently lost cause, then surely the task undertaken by the local preachers of early Primitive Methodism must be romantic indeed.

At the outset the pioneers of Primitive Methodism

were all local preachers. The founders of the Connexion were local preachers for years before they were set apart wholly to the work of the ministry. The same is true of all who were in association with them. It was from the ranks of this class that the ministry was drawn, and is still drawn to this hour. With comparatively little equipment of a scholastic kind, a man must still essay the adventure of preaching to his fellows ere he can be entitled to the fuller equipment fitting him for the regular ministry. But if the school into which the early local preachers were thrust was rough and rude and nerve-shaking, it was often highly effective. Men learned to preach then, as they can only learn to-day—by preaching. And when immediate results of a spiritual kind were the test of effectiveness, men whose hearts were aflame with zeal for the salvation of their fellows quickly discovered the readiest methods of success. Of the people themselves, they knew how to address the people so as to reach at once their heads and their hearts, and constant practice gave many of them marvellous perfection. That perfection did not consist in grammatical accuracy or literary exactitude,—although many of them possessed both—but in that homely yet effective eloquence which laid hold of the people's hearts and constrained them to yield their wills to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mr. Arthur H. Patterson, the author of "From Hayloft to Temple," and of many another far more

widely known work, has described the local preacher as the most picturesque figure in Primitive Methodism. In the early days especially he was everywhere racy of the soil, and an unspoiled child of nature. That absence of uniformity which was characteristic of the regular ministry was still more prominent in the local preachers. In either class there was no college to smooth out the angularities and the individualities of the preacher, and if this involved loss it also meant gain. In every class to-day the spread of education has a tendency to make men alike; seventy and eighty years ago, if education was got at all, it was largely self-acquired, and being what is called self-made, the local preacher revealed everywhere the variety which is nature's hall-mark. It needed grit, endurance, dogged perseverance, and a Divine passion to secure the necessary equipment for the work of the local preacher, and then to make the long, toilsome, hungry and exhausting journeys which were demanded in the prosecution of the task he had undertaken.

If some of these men seemed to pride themselves on their lack of "book larnin'," their herculean efforts to supply the lack rather belied their professions in this regard. But there is an education other than that which comes through books, and of this the local preacher of the pioneer days had a respectable share. Providence equipped him for his work, and the equipment served him far more

effectively with the class to whom he ministered than mere scholastic attainments could have done. Among the men who came to the top were many striking figures. There was about them something of the sternness of the old Hebrew prophet, and not a little of his vision and faculty divine. Their conceptions of truth were often bold, striking, and picturesque to the last degree. Their sentences, if sometimes unvarnished, were graphic and arresting; they furnished living pictures that men could not help seeing and understanding. They excelled in denunciation, and their words often stung like whips. In appearance, in speech, in mental habits, there was a quaintness about them that invested many of them with a certain halo of romance over a wide area of country.

It is not without significance that most of the men who attained influence in the councils of the Denomination had by dint of incessant toil remedied their defects of education. Of this class was Thomas Bateman. Twice President of the Conference, he, by his sound judgment and legal knowledge, was of immense service in drawing up the Deed Poll of the Connexion and shaping its polity. Whether he suggested, as is said, the arrangement by which the higher courts of the church are composed of two laymen to one minister, is very doubtful. This is supposed to have been due to the dread, which he shared with Hugh Bourne, of clerical tyranny. And

yet he was a man of singular tolerance, and all his life retained some connection with the Established Church. His life nearly covered the nineteenth century, for he was born in 1799 and died in 1897. Neither physically nor mentally was he considered strong in childhood, but vast possibilities slumbered in his seemingly dull intellect and frail physique. He had a quenchless thirst for knowledge, an indomitable will, and the genius of industry. The midnight hours invariably found him at his books, and years of drudgery equipped him for a mighty service. A conversation he heard when only eight years of age between a Churchman and a Wesleyan revealed to him the fact that real religion, whether of church or chapel, is the same thing the world over; and to this he traced the liberal principles which influenced him all his life.

It was not till 1819 that this youth, already touched to fine issues, came into contact with the people who were destined to discover his worth and bend his energies to his true life work. Resident in Chorley, he heard something of the strange doings of Bourne and Clowes, and learning that one of their associates, John Wedgwood, was to preach at Bulkeley, he was invited to hear him, but refused. He shortly afterwards, however, heard Wedgwood at Chorley Green, and joined the class which was formed as the result of that mighty service. He soon became the leader of the class, and quickly found the sphere for which his restless energies, his business sagacity, his legal acumen, his immense

capacity for work, his broad catholicity of spirit, and his intense religious devotion fitted him. This spare man of little more than the middle size, with his swarthy complexion and penetrating eyes, his indomitable will and masterful spirit—sometimes a trifle too masterful and overbearing if the truth must be told—was destined to wield great influence and do herculean service through the most formative years of Primitive Methodism. For over fifty years he had but few Sundays free, and conducted, on the average, three meetings during the week. An able and powerful preacher, he would sometimes walk forty and fifty miles to his appointments, taking his food in his pockets, arriving home at all hours, but always up and out at the farm work by four o'clock in summer and five in winter.

Romantic stories are told of his journeys. Once, after being in bed for a week and forbidden by the doctor to leave his room, he drove to the market on the Saturday morning, intending to travel by coach to his appointment for the next day. When the coach arrived, not a seat was to be had. Nothing daunted, the sick man started to walk, and at the end of thirty miles rested for a couple of hours on a hard, wooden couch at Newport in the middle of the night, then rose and pursued his journey, fulfilled his engagement, and returned home, better than when he started. Embarked in a prosperous business, he abandoned it because it absorbed the time he had hitherto given to God's work, and

the partner he thus left became a millionaire. Thomas Bateman had his defects, but they were largely defects of manner, and taking him all in all, he was one of the greatest laymen Primitive Methodism has ever possessed.

It is impossible within the brief compass of a single chapter to do more than sketch a few representative men among the tens of thousands of local preachers who have done so much towards the making of Primitive Methodism. Thomas Bateman may stand as a type of the able and masterful lay preachers, who, by their intellect, their sagacity, their sound judgment, their intense devotion and herculean toil laid the foundations of this Church. For sheer force of intellect, combined with high character and extraordinary pulpit power, no better representative of his class could be found than George Race, Senior, of Weardale. He made a profound impression upon all who came into contact with him, and wielded an almost magical influence over his fellow dalesmen. Somewhat wild and wayward in his youth, playing truant as a boy, and much given to hunting as a young man, an illness of six months led to his conversion, and the change was so real and wonderful that to him ever afterwards conversion was the "abiding miracle of Christianity."

He experienced a great intellectual quickening, and at once began that career as a student which gave him such mastery of the great problems of

philosophy, science, and religion. William Harland helped him greatly at this time in his quest for the best literature, and raised indeed the intellectual tone of the entire Dale. Race became extremely popular as a local preacher, and his services were in great demand throughout the Dales of the North country. His striking form and personal appearance often reminded men of the late William Ewart Gladstone. The originality of his conceptions, his philosophic grasp, which gave at once simplicity and comprehensiveness to his discourses, combined with his intense spirituality and passionate earnestness, made him acceptable alike to the humble Christian and the cultured saint. The pulpit was his throne. His tall, erect figure, his kingly presence, his very mien as he faced his audience, suggested the born preacher, while his clear, musical, penetrating voice arrested the attention and charmed the ear of the most careless in a moment. Under the inspiration of the great truths with which the Spirit of God filled his mind and warmed his heart, his form seemed to dilate, his countenance became illumined, and his magnificent voice thrilled with passion, until he seemed borne along as in a chariot of fire. The force and subtlety of his reasoning, the ease and mastery with which he marshalled his arguments, his natural declamation, his accent of overwhelming conviction, and his tone of unquestionable sincerity, produced an extraordinary effect. Sometimes, as when preaching on "Christ

weeping over Jerusalem," it was difficult to say whether the sermon was mightier in its pathos or in its argument. The two elements seemed perfectly to blend, making one magnificent whole that carried everything before it like the rush of a mighty river.

His house was through his long life the home of the preachers, and what marvellous discussions he often held with them, lasting far into morning, on the great themes of philosophy and revelation. To the Quarterly Review and other periodicals he contributed articles on various subjects, including geology, in which he was deeply interested. Even in his days of growing physical weakness his spirit grew in intellectual energy and moral greatness. As the Rev. James Taylor, who was with him in his last days, has well said: "While we would think of him as a man of vast and varied knowledge, extraordinary and diversified powers, keen perceptive faculties, great logical penetration, large and tolerant views; yet better than his accumulated stores of knowledge, the strivings of a vigorous intellect, the soarings of a brilliant imagination, better than any or all of them was the simple and child-like docility with which he received the Gospel of Christ, and the firm faith with which he rested on Him for salvation."

If George Race stands for the philosophic thinker and orator among the local preachers of the early days, George Charlton may be taken to represent

the practical reformer and Temperance pioneer. In regard to Temperance work, he represented a large class, but so far as Municipal distinction was concerned, he stood probably alone. These were not the days when Primitive Methodist mayors were common, but the North of England knew George Charlton not only as the able and uncompromising advocate of Temperance principles, who preached the Gospel of Christ on Sunday and the Gospel of Temperance on nearly every other day of the week, but in later years as a Municipal ruler, who twice in succession adorned the civic chair of Gateshead, and as the Radical who was made a magistrate by Lord Beaconsfield, and lectured the drunks from the Bench with a wisdom, mingled with kindliness and humour, that often did more towards reformation than five shillings and costs. At the Mayor's banquets he pledged the guests, not in intoxicants, for there were none on the table, a unique thing at that time, but in a bunch of grapes, "a bottle of wine in the form in which God made it." He was presented at the close of his second mayoralty with a public drinking fountain, which to-day stands as a memorial of a strenuous and noble career in the picturesque Saltwell Park of Gateshead.

But it is as a local preacher we wish specially to speak of him here. Born near Hexham, in 1808, he was brought up on his father's farm, and at sixteen went into business as a butcher with his brother at Blaydon-on-Tyne. He was first associated with

the Baptists, but his fiery, vehement spirit demanded a more active form of Christian usefulness. He seems to have come into contact with the Primitive Methodists almost immediately, for he was only sixteen when placed on the local preachers' plan, and was at once captivated by their out-door evangelism and zeal for the salvation of the masses. His sterling character, his ability as a public speaker, and the energy and enthusiasm with which he threw himself into the work of preaching, soon won for him a wide popularity. From Newcastle to Berwick, and from Shields to Maryport, his name became a household word. Having made a modest competency, he retired from business in 1857, in order to devote himself entirely to religious and philanthropic work. He was one of a group of able and statesman-like officials, who wielded over a long series of years great influence in the councils of Northern Primitive Methodism, as well as in the Connexional Committees and the Conference. He was elected Vice-President of the Newcastle Conference of 1876, and the North would fain have conferred on him the more unique distinction of the Presidency. His public utterances were always marked by strong common sense, cogent argument, apt illustration, and on the platform by a fine caustic humour. His commanding presence, the ring of genuine honesty and sincerity which was always to be heard in his deliverances, the unselfishness, the purity, the disinterestedness of his

life, united to make him a striking personality. His courage and intrepidity and consistency in the advocacy of thoroughgoing Temperance principles, in the days when they were highly unpopular even among the churches, won the respect of all classes, and his work made for him a name that will never be forgotten in the annals of Gospel Temperance.

In the past, as happily still in many places in the present, nearly every circuit had its local preacher of unusual character and distinction, whose services were in great request over a considerable area. Stephenson Stobbs, for example, originally of Allendale Station, walked nearly 10,000 miles, preached some 1,320 ordinary and 1,300 special and anniversary sermons. There were some who by their power and unction could sway large out-door assemblies, and were thus specially fitted for effective service at Camp Meetings. They were often picturesque figures, who by the vividness and imaginative force of their presentations of truth reminded men of the great preachers of Puritan and Covenanting times. Every circuit, too, would have one or more quaint preachers, whose utterances owed little or nothing to books, but much to their intimate knowledge of human nature, and to the close acquaintance with the daily life of the common people, derived from life-long association with them. Then the local preacher of statesmanship has persisted through all the century. For a generation, for example, William Beckworth,

of silvery speech, chaste diction, wide knowledge and keen insight into the needs of the Connexion, has been a leader in Conference and Committee. For sheer ability, for the power of fitting the word to the thought so that the one shall exactly express the other, giving it wheels, to use the expressive simile of the wise man—apples of gold in pictures of silver—and delivering himself in the accent and phrase of culture, William Beckworth has had no superior in the whole hundred years of our history. For a similar period Thomas Lawrence has been a master in Israel. He, too, has the gift of statesmanship, and has been a leader in Evangelism and Missionary enterprise equally with his contemporary, Mr. Beckworth. His tall, majestic figure, his dark, flashing eye, his magnificent beard, his spiritual fervour, his enthusiasm, his pulpit and platform ability, and his power in debate, have made the African Missionary Treasurer a striking and impressive figure in the Conference and at great Connexional gatherings for more than a quarter of a century.

There remains yet another class, the largest and most important of all,—the great body of humble, faithful, devoted local preachers, who, year in and year out, have throughout the century supplied the rural pulpits of the Connexion, never neglecting their work, travelling in all weathers long and weary journeys, after a week of hard toil, to minister often to small congregations, some of which could

not, or would not, furnish even a preacher his dinner. A volume might easily be filled with the names and deeds of these devoted saints. A single case gleaned casually in conversation from a superannuated minister, well acquainted with the facts, must suffice. James Cripps, of Chisledon, Wilts., had six shillings a week as an agricultural labourer. He was a local preacher seventy years, and to the end of his days made a home for the preachers. He has been known to walk thirty-six miles on a Sunday, preach four times, with nothing to eat but the haws he gathered from the hedges. He often reached home from his appointments at four o'clock on the Monday morning, and twice, on his return, found his wife and family in the garden, the house having been burnt down in his absence. If in this disastrous experience he is not typical of the great class to which he belongs, in respect to long journeys, hard fare, unstinted devotion and unselfish toil, he will fitly enough represent thousands who carried the light and sweetness and power of the Gospel of Jesus to the villages and hamlets of England, which otherwise must have been left largely in a condition of spiritual destitution.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Poverty and Varied Occupations of the Early Preachers	191
Slender Equipment of Preachers Entering the Ministry	192
Early Preachers Called to a Special Evangelism	192
Chief Qualifications Required for the Ministry	192
The Survival of the Fittest	193
How the Preachers Toiled for Self-Improvement	193
Small Salaries and Few Books of Early Preachers	193
Hugh Gilmore's Library	194
The Portable Library of the Early Preachers	194
The "Homes" of the Early Preachers	195
John Petty's Scholastic Acquirements	196
James Macpherson's Attainments	196
A Little Curate Silenced	197
Thomas Greenfield's Scholarship and Writings	197
James Austin Bastow's Bible Dictionary	198
Hugh Gilmore's Trials and Triumphs	199
Thomas Burt's Estimate of Hugh Gilmore	200
Colin Campbell McKechnie's Culture and Influence	201
Dr. Peake's Eminence as a Bible Scholar	203

CHAPTER X.

OF ITS PURSUIT OF LEARNING.

FEW things have more romance associated with them than the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties. In thousands of cases men who have risen to distinction began with no scholastic advantages, but impelled by an insatiable thirst for knowledge, they gave themselves, amid innumerable discouragements, to the work of self-improvement. Few richer mines could be found for treasure of this description than the story of the early days of Primitive Methodism. Its local preachers and ministers began with no equipment often save the spiritual regeneration which involved an intellectual quickening that started them in the quest for knowledge.

The early preachers had for the most part been reared in homes of poverty and obscurity. Up to the day they entered on the work of the ministry they had to earn their living. They were drawn from every trade and occupation—agricultural labourer, pitman, blacksmith, joiner, moulder,

woodman, tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor, weaver, and, in a very few cases, schoolmaster. Most of them had been compelled to earn their living from the days of tender childhood, and of schooling they had little or none. Had they been called immediately to a settled ministry, they would have been quite unequal to the work; but for evangelism their slender scholastic and intellectual equipment did not disqualify them. Not but what the evangelist requires thorough equipment, but the evangelism to which these men were called was of an exceptional kind. They had to break up new ground, and an arresting message, dealing with the elementary truths of the Gospel salvation, and delivered with force, with fervour, with tremendous earnestness and overwhelming conviction, was what was demanded. Having been "tremendously converted" themselves, the early preachers were possessed by an overmastering desire to save others. Success in soul-saving was the first qualification of the preacher, local or travelling. The ability to preach effectively was indispensable. Hence the candidates for the ministry were subjected to little examination of a scholastic kind. "Has he grace?" was the first question. Is he soundly converted and genuinely good? "Has he gifts?" was the second inquiry. By this was meant the natural gifts for preaching—ready utterance, a retentive memory, the ability to effectively appeal to the unconverted. "Has he fruits?" was the last, and in some

respects most important of all. "If God has not owned his labours in the conversion of sinners, then he is not called to preach."

The need for labourers was so urgent, that men were often thrust into the itinerant ministry with the slenderest equipment; but the work in which they had to engage served to weed the ranks of the unfit. It was a case of the survival of the fittest. The great bulk of the preachers entered upon their work with an overwhelming sense of their unfitness, scholastically and intellectually, for it, but their reliance was on the power of the Holy Spirit, and God marvellously owned their labours. Happily they recognised the need for self-improvement, and set themselves with extraordinary diligence to remedy their defects. It was often the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties with a vengeance. Every spare moment had to be utilised. The book would be fastened to the handle of the plough, and the ploughman would read it as he bestrode the furrow. Hugh Bourne studied Greek in the intervals of haymaking.

After entering the ministry, the opportunities for reading and study were very limited. The young preachers usually suffered from a chronic scarcity of books. There was the will to buy, but the means were lacking. Yet, when the salary of £3 10s. was received at the Quarterly Meeting, the first thought was of the books that might be bought. And, alas, books then were costly. A sovereign

would have to be expended for what a few pence would buy to-day. Hugh Gilmore, for example, possessed only a Bible and a few back numbers of "Good Words" and "The Christian World" until a few friends subscribed the wherewithal to purchase the young man a few books before he entered on the work of the ministry. Passing through Edinburgh during the second year of his probation, the old book shops proved so fascinating that he spent all his money, and had to walk the whole distance from Edinburgh to Berwick on foot, carrying a packful of precious literature. When he got home he was footsore, but happy.

But if books were scarce, opportunities for reading them were few. Circuits were wide, and the travelling preachers were often weeks away from their lodgings or homes. There was one wide circuit with eight preachers, who seldom met except at the Quarterly Meeting. John Wesley studied on horseback, and a splendid horseman he must have been. The early Primitive Methodist preachers studied on foot, a book in one hand and an umbrella in the other, with a portable library and wardrobe on their backs. The portable library often varied, no doubt, but a guess might have been safely hazarded as a rule that a Bible, a hymn book, "Wesley's Sermons, "Fletcher's Checks," "The Pilgrim's Progress," Baxter's "Saints' Everlasting Rest," and Watts' "Improvement of the Mind" would be found among them. With their

load of books the preachers were often mistaken for travelling packmen, and not unfrequently, when inviting the people to the service from door to door, they would be greeted with the response: "We don't want *nothing* to-day."

The homes where accommodation was obtained at night on the circuit rounds seldom afforded a room for retirement, and reading and study had to be carried on in the midst of the family. Here is an actual experience, related by Henry Woodcock. "The good man of the house sat on his stool all day long before a small window, plying his tools; just in the rear, a daughter, a dressmaker, using her needle; the mother, a model housewife, 'took in a bit o' washing from the hall,' and was usually busy at the tub. Dear old granny sat in the corner, knitting all day long; four children clustered as near the fire as they could get, and all their tongues were often wagging at the same time; a dog and cat stretched themselves on the hearth-stone. The preacher sat—well, where he could. Like most cobblers, 'Joseph' kept a number of birds, with tuneful throats, and they often seemed to keep tune to the twang of their owner's thread and the strokes of his hammer. Worse still, there was a parrot of gay plumage and chattering tongue. He used to cock his head against the wire of his cage, as if listening, Paul-Pry-like, to catch a stray word amidst the incessant din, and then scream out: 'Off you go! Off you go!' instantly counter-

manded with : ' Come back ! Come back ! ' followed by the rollicking cry : ' Ha, ha, ha ! ' " This was, of course, an extreme case ; but the difficulties in the way of the student were many and varied.

It was a severe intellectual discipline the early preachers were called upon to undergo if they were bent on thorough efficiency and the conquest of knowledge. If in some cases the itinerancy tended to produce mental laziness and the prolonged use of old sermons, in many others it resulted in real scholarship and solid learning. The passion for self-improvement overcame all difficulties. These men possessed the tenacity of purpose, if not the simplicity, of the local preacher, who when going courting took with him a copy of Butler's Analogy. It is, recorded, too, that he read that weighty treatise to his sweetheart, and that she married him in spite of it all. To overcome the defects of early education and secure genuine intellectual culture, they gave themselves by day and by night, often in the early morning and often, too, late at night, to reading and study. And their achievements were in not a few instances marvellous. John Petty became a competent Greek and Hebrew scholar, and the first Theological tutor to candidates for the ministry in the Denomination. He presented a rare combination of scholarship and evangelistic fervour. All his learning was consecrated to the work of winning souls. James Macpherson, by dint of incessant study, also

became well acquainted with Greek and Hebrew, and had a consuming passion for helping young men in their studies. To him and his pupil, the now venerable James Travis, we owe the Hartley College, and Mr. Macpherson became the first Principal and Tutor. An amusing story is told of how, on one occasion, he put to shame a contemptible little curate. The two were passing a Primitive Methodist chapel, the curate, either greatly daring or greatly ignorant, remarked with a sneer: "The preachers of that chapel are an ignorant set of men; they cannot even read the Bible." "Well," said Mr. Macpherson, "I am one of their ministers. Suppose *we* read a chapter together, verse by verse? Have you got your Greek Testament with you?" "No, sir." "I've got mine," said Mr. Macpherson. "Now let's begin." He read the first verse, but the curate could not read the next; he did not know his Greek.

Thomas Greenfield, who also began in illiteracy and became a College tutor, was a profound Greek and Hebrew scholar. He had no taste for ecclesiasticism, and questions of Connexional legislation and Conferential procedure interested him not; but he was a diligent student, and became amazingly learned in the Holy Scriptures. With all the progress of modern times, his "Expository Discourses on Romans V., VI., and VII." are still valuable and well worth careful study. He was a wonderful preacher, and the ablest preachers

and writers of the Denomination delighted to sit under his ministry when opportunity afforded. His keen insight, his ripe scholarship, his deep knowledge of the Bible, and his sly, pawky humour, made him a preacher delightful alike to gentle and simple, learned and illiterate. "Can you give me the address of the Rev. Thomas Greenfield?" said a Church clergyman to Rev. Henry Woodcock. "I regard him as by far the best Hebrew scholar I have ever known. . . . . A plain man, gentlemen, a *very plain* man; a prodigious scholar, and a great theologian."

In the realm of Biblical scholarship James Austin Bastow occupied a position peculiarly his own for many years. By diligent study he became a brilliant preacher and a ripe scholar. He sought to make himself thoroughly acquainted with everything bearing on the study of the Bible, and the study and research of a lifetime were concentrated in his famous Bible Dictionary, which originally appeared in three handsome volumes, and passed through many editions. The writer has seen a copy of the work on the shelves of the great St. Deiniol's Library, which the late Mr. Gladstone bequeathed to the nation. The copy in question bore evidence of having been consulted by Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Bastow received from him a cordial message of recognition of the manner in which he had dealt with subjects of deep historical interest to Bible students.

Mention has been made of Hugh Gilmore and his slender equipment when he entered upon the work of a travelling preacher. His life was one long romance, the earlier years of which have been described with more or less accuracy in what is professedly a work of fiction, and yet is largely a narrative of fact.* A street-arab in Glasgow, he never knew his parents. The streets were his home, his school, his playground. He lived in them, slept in them, starved in them, and nearly perished in them. He became a bottle blower's apprentice, and ran away to Liverpool. From thence he made his way on foot to Newcastle-on-Tyne, where he came into contact with the Primitive Methodists, who were instrumental in his conversion. He was made a local preacher, and in due course entered the ministry. He became a preacher and lecturer of striking originality and popular power, and an extensive contributor to the Quarterly Review and the Connexional magazines. For the sake of his wife's health he removed to Australia, taking charge of the Primitive Methodist Church at North Adelaide, where he almost immediately attained an amazing influence and popularity. Statesmen, judges, editors, and literary men of all grades attended his ministry, and the common people heard him gladly. Said Sir George Grey at the close of one of his lectures: "I have never

* "Hugh Morrigill," by Joseph Ritson (P.M. Book Room).

heard an address so eloquent, arguments so cogent, or seen an audience so moved." By his organisation, known as the "Commonwealth," he had the city mapped out into districts, and bands of men and women of various sects, or no sect, who followed Christ and wished to serve men, went from house to house to seek and save the lost. "The struggling poor were assisted; waifs and strays were picked up, the drunkard reclaimed, new arrivals in the colony looked after; men and women out of employment assisted to get work; free libraries established to bring healthy literature to the people, while sisters of the people were to visit the sick in their homes."

It is said that had he lived the people would have built him a church as large as Spurgeon's Tabernacle, and when he died the whole city, nay, the entire colony, mourned. The poorest of the poor hung around his house during his illness to learn how he was progressing, and one poor old woman walked seven miles to place a bunch of flowers on his grave. A Wesleyan minister travelled eighty miles to hear him, but found him dead. "A man of strong convictions, yet largest charity, in him," to quote the words of Thomas Burt, M.P., "strength and tenderness, were rarely combined. He possessed in large measure that

> 'Gentleness, which,
> When it weds with manhood,
> Makes a man.'"

His brief ministry of two years in North Adelaide is one of the most marvellous on record.

But among the *litterateurs* of Primitive Methodism Colin Campbell McKechnie must always hold a foremost place. Few men have wielded so remarkable an influence or contributed so largely to the intellectual culture of ministry and laity as he. Born at Paisley, he was, in boyhood, brought into connection with Primitive Methodism through the influence of Bella McNair, a servant maid in his family. It seemed to him as if he had got into a new world and was encompassed with a new atmosphere,—an atmosphere of sweetness and love. The tremendous earnestness of preacher and people astonished him. The preacher's "face glowed, and his voice thrilled. His eye went through me like a knife. It transfixed me. I was sure he meant me, the whole discourse was intended for me. Had it been otherwise, he would not have preached in that way. I felt like a criminal arraigned before a tribunal of justice, listening to the sentence of doom." Scarcely less astonishing was the joy of these people. When as a miserable penitent he was seeking salvation, it seemed almost an outrage that their faces should be radiant with joy, and that over and over again they should break out into exultant words of praise.

Conversion was followed by an insatiable thirst for knowledge. It is not surprising that "The Imitation of Christ" did not help him, already

afflicted as he was with an undue tendency to introspectiveness. Nor is it remarkable that Fletcher's "Checks to Antinomianism" should have been read with pleasure and profit by a youth encompassed with the atmosphere of Calvinism. Rummaging one day among a few books kept in an out of the way corner of the house, he came across Watts' "Improvement of the Mind," and discovered in the little discoloured volume a precious treasure. The book became his daily companion, and developed in him that love of abstract thought and philosophical study which characterised him through life. He became first a class leader, then a local preacher, and within some two years of his conversion was called into the ministry. The Rev. W. Eckersell exercised over him at this critical juncture a healthy and inspiring intellectual and spiritual influence, and although the youth was only sixteen years of age, he had made such an impression on the minister's mind that he was absolutely convinced of his fitness for the ministry.

The years that followed were fruitful in every sense. Mr. McKechnie's ministry was remarkable equally for its intellectuality and its spiritual fervour. Perhaps no man ever witnessed such marvellous revivals in his ordinary ministry, and for a generation Colin Campbell McKechnie's influence over the intellectual culture of the Denomination was paramount. He inaugurated those "Preachers' Associations," which have done

so much to stimulate reading and study among the ministers and laymen. He was associated with the founding of the "Ambassador and Quarterly Review," and edited it from 1855 to 1896. Editor of the Connexional magazines from 1876 to 1887, he revolutionsed them in their get-up and lifted them to a higher literary level of ability, and was elected to the Presidency in 1880 by a unanimous vote, a unique distinction at that period.

Space will not permit any extended reference to the men of to-day. University degrees have become comparatively common amongst us, many of them won by ministers actively engaged in circuit work. But the most eminent scholar in our Church to-day is Professor A. S. Peake, D.D., the son of a Primitive Methodist minister. After a brilliant scholastic career at Oxford, Dr. Peake became a Fellow of his College, and is to-day one of the foremost Biblical scholars of the age. His modesty is as conspicuous as his learning, and his influence over the rising ministry and throughout the Connexion at large is one of the most remarkable things in our modern history.

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Evolution of a Circuit	205
How New Places Were Missioned . . .	206
The Way Preachers were "Called Out" .	207
An Easy Way out of the Ministry . . .	208
The Salaries of the Early Preachers . .	209
The "Homes" of the Early Preachers . .	210
Rules for Missioning New Ground . . .	211
The Circuit Houses of the Early Days . .	212
Some Specimens of Preachers' Houses . .	214
The Circuit Furniture	215
A Gentle Hint to the Officials . . .	217

CHAPTER XI.

OF ITS CIRCUIT LIFE.

THE Circuit is an essential institution of Methodism. It would have been impossible for Primitive Methodism to have evangelised rural England on any other system. Only by uniting under one authority a number of small churches, or societies as they were called, could the cohesion necessary for successful evangelism and the development of some kind of church organisation be secured. The travelling preacher was the nucleus around which the organisation gathered. A number of places having been missioned, and regular preaching services arranged, they were placed upon the Plan, and supplied with preachers to conduct the services. The whole might consist of a dozen or twenty places or more, scattered over a considerable area of country, and taking its name from some town or village. It might be a Mission, a Branch, or a Circuit. Only in the latter case would it possess complete autonomy. As a Mission or a Branch it would be under the control of, and

receive perhaps some financial assistance from, the parent circuit. As soon as it was strong enough financially, and in regard to its official life, it would be made an independent circuit with its own superintendent preacher, its local preachers, its circuit steward, society stewards, Sunday School superintendents, and its class leaders. These officials in the main constituted the Quarterly Meeting, the supreme court of the circuit regulating its affairs.

Directly a circuit found itself in possession of a small balance, it turned its attention to the work of missioning new ground, so as to form new societies and new circuits. A missionary would be sent forth on this work if the place to be dealt with happened to be distant. In some cases he would be promised a small salary ; in others he would be expected to find his own. Robert Key missioned the district of Mattishall, thirty miles long, and founded a circuit with forty churches, thirty-five local preachers, and seven hundred and fifteen members, without costing the parent circuit five shillings. In the early period he did not receive £2 a quarter. The famous Hull circuit was so fruitful a mother that she missioned ground which in five years constituted no fewer than seventeen circuits, with an aggregate membership of 7,666. History still records that certain places were missioned from others, and not uncommonly the child soon became stronger than the parent.

In cases of extraordinary development, a second travelling preacher would soon be required. Inquiries would be made of the authorities of the district as to where a young local preacher could be found who had revealed his fitness for the work of the ministry, and had been recommended by his station for the itinerancy. Then the circuit needing an additional travelling preacher would "call him out." At the beginning there was little or no preliminary examination. It is not surprising that with their slender educational equipment, young men pressed to enter the ministry often doubted their call. To such a youth an aged minister said, as he placed his hand on his shoulder :

> How ready is the man to go
> Whom God hath never sent!
> How timorous, diffident, and slow
> His chosen instrument.

"Do you know the disease ? "

"I do, to my sorrow."

"Do you know the cure ? "

"Thank God, I do."

"Do you want to tell others of it ? "

"I do, indeed."

"Then if these things do not fit you to preach the Gospel to perishing souls, it is difficult to know what can do so."

The need for labourers was so pressing, that men were thrust into the harvest field with the assurance

that they would soon demonstrate their fitness or otherwise for the work. If they proved unfit, they were sent home, or allowed to retire. The fit were men with character, preaching gifts, and the ability to win souls. It was the rough and ready training of the mission field to which they were subjected. Of the unfit probationer, it was very soon remarked that "he would never make his way," and the fact was soon brought home to him. If there was an easy way into the ministry, there was also an easy way out. The circuits took care of that, and it became a case of the survival of the fittest. The rude college of circuit life made effective preachers, mighty evangelists, and developed men of striking and original powers.

The process of weeding out the unfit was aided by the hardships to be endured and the small salaries that were paid. The phrase "making his way" was significant of much in relation to the early ministry. A "young man," or probationer, was an additional labourer on a field perhaps that had hitherto only sufficed to maintain one or two preachers, as the case might be. The additional man was expected so to develop the field already occupied, as to maintain himself or break up new ground with the same result. In circuits that had become organised, and were simply requiring additional ministerial labour on the existing area of operations, the salary paid was not calculated to tempt the self-seeking and luxurious. It was

£24 a year if they managed to get it, and out of this they had to pay for board and lodging. A female travelling preacher received £16 a year. The sainted Mary Porteous never received more than £2 10s. a quarter, with £6 for board and lodging. The Driffield circuit at one time had six unmarried preachers, whose united salaries amounted to the magnificent sum of £144 a year.

Often the people were so poor that they failed to raise even the small salaries allowed. George Morgan received thirteen shillings for his first quarter's salary, while William Marwood, in the York circuit in 1842 received £2 a quarter, and the same sum in Hull the following year. If it be remembered that these were the days of Protection, when farm labourers received seven shillings a week and board, this is not surprising. When in the forties the salaries of the married ministers were by Conferential enactment raised to nineteen shillings a week, it almost created a rebellion in some quarters. Permitted, rather than enacted, would be the more correct word in relation to the action of Conference. It was something for circuits to be *allowed* to pay this handsome salary. The probationer's board and lodging would be paid for on the most economic scale. "I paid two shillings a week for washing and lodgings," says the Rev. Henry Woodcock: "breakfast, tea, and supper, each meal threepence; dinner fourpence. Provisions were really dearer then than now, and our

entertainers stood a poor chance of becoming rich. Of course, meals got from home were uncharged for by those with whom we lodged." Those who entertained the "young man" generally did it from love of the cause, and sometimes all the heroism was on their part rather than on the part of their guest.

And what shall we say of the "homes" of the preachers when on circuit? As has been indicated in a previous chapter, frequent and long absences from their own homes or lodgings necessitated some kind of provision night after night for weeks at a time elsewhere. The preachers could not afford to pay for this entertainment. In breaking up new ground they were often in great straits, and a hedgeside or the side of a haystack might be the only resting place they could obtain. Long journeys would occasionally be taken to the nearest hospitable home. George Wallis, on one occasion, made for the house of Mr. S. Goddard, near Newbury. When he arrived he found the inmates had all retired to rest, so he crept into a heap of straw to sleep. Later on came Thomas Russell in similar plight, and the older missionary quickly roused the family and got his young colleague more comfortable quarters.

It is impossible to speak with too much enthusiasm and appreciation of these kindly entertainers of the preachers all over the land. Often at great sacrifice and much inconvenience they made

a home for both local and travelling preachers. True they often entertained angels unawares, and their children received inspiration from the visits of the preachers that led them into paths of religion and culture which proved a blessing through all their after years ; while by the parents these visits were looked forward to with unfeigned delight. All the same, it was often at no small cost to themselves, and the Church will remain indebted to them for all time. Notwithstanding the smaller circuits and changed conditions, the preachers' "home" is still an institution throughout the Connexion, and to-day thousands are rendering glad service in this way.

While a good deal of variety obtained as to the conditions and methods observed in missioning new places, occasionally definite rules and regulations were formulated by the circuits. John Ride sent a copy of the regulations which obtained in the Shefford circuit to the magazine in 1834. Summarised, they provide that the missionary shall preach eight sermons a week, and as many more as he chooses. If one missionary is sent out, he must take up eight places, so as to cover a given area, "sweeping the country as far as he goes." He must preach one sermon a week at each place, mostly in the open air, winter or summer. After preaching, he must endeavour to obtain a house in which to hold a prayer meeting. He must diligently visit from house to house, which will

open his way: for he is expected to live on his mission. The Lord will almost uniformly open his way for food and lodging. "Still he must expect privations." As soon as the work breaks out he will form societies, and use every means to cultivate the minds of the people. He must meet the classes after preaching and bring forward all he can to pray. By and by praying companies will be formed, and planned to hold meetings at different places on Sundays,—and "this is a nursery for local preachers." When the missionary has preached a quarter at his eight places, he makes a general collection at every place in support of the mission. "This seldom fails paying his salary, and sometimes it does more." If at any place there is grievous persecution, it is made known throughout the circuit, that prayer may be made for that place. "And this has been blessed indeed." That, in rough outline, is how Primitive Methodism evangelised rural England and became a power in the land.

And much might be said of the houses of the travelling preachers. A whole volume of romantic stories might easily be compiled on this subject. As everything had to grow, the beginnings were on the humblest scale. When a Mission or Branch composed of poor people made itself responsible for a preacher, they had to provide such a house as their slender resources would allow. If they could not pay his salary by the time he had to

remove, he went without; he could only claim what was raised up to the last Sunday of his stay in the circuit. Sometimes the house would be provided but with little or no furniture. A newly-married couple might arrive at their new circuit and find there was no home to receive them. For the time, therefore, they must go into lodgings. Special efforts would forthwith be made to raise a little money for the purchase of a bed and a few indispensable articles of furniture. The uninitiated may wonder why the preachers could not furnish their own houses like other people, or defer marriage until they were in a position to do so. The answer is simple. Throughout Methodism it is the rule that a minister shall be provided with a furnished house; and a minister who had been required to wait until he saved enough to furnish his own might have found it necessary to wait a good while on the salaries paid in the early days.

Romantic stories are told of the houses provided in various parts of the Connexion. The people were poor, and had to secure such houses as were within their means. It was a wonderful thing often how these poor saints kept a minister at all. No doubt they could sometimes have done more, but they were unable to see that a minister needed any better house than his people. A circuit consisting chiefly of newly-converted people, who had not yet been lifted out of the conditions in which the Gospel had found them, could scarcely be

expected to see things in true perspective. Suddenly confronted with the duty of providing a house for the minister, they took the line of least resistance, and rented the first and cheapest they could get. Once the minister was settled there the arrangement continued. What served to accommodate good Mr. So and So was good enough for his successor, who might be a very saintly and a very useful man, but about whom as yet nobody knew anything.

William Clowes lived in a small cottage up a narrow, dismal passage adjoining the chapel. Fifty years ago it became the "chapel-keeper's house," and that worthy complained bitterly and often of its unfitness as a residence. At North Shields, the house where John Hallam, future President and General Committee Secretary, was born, was under the chapel. A two-roomed house was common, and one of these residences has been described as having a window in which "one broken square was stuffed with rags; another with a bit of pasteboard." "There was an oven, but it would not draw; a chimney, but it smoked." The Rev. R. Langham, at Bridlington, occupied a thatch-roofed cottage near a farm-yard. At night the house was often visited by rats. In wet weather the water ran down the walls, and occasionally before breakfast both bucket and broom were needed to remove the puddles. A ladder led to the bedroom above. Another minister describes his environment by saying: "We live opposite the

gasworks, at the foot of a railway embankment, in close contiguity to a timber yard, under the shade of three blast furnaces, and over a coal mine." He consoles himself with the thought that as yet they had had neither a conflagration nor a collision, nor had they been burnt or blown up.

The Rev. Henry Woodcock brought his young bride to a house consisting of two rooms, which had been used as vestries, situated behind the chapel, and approached by a dark passage. The solitary door opened into a dark and dismal yard, used for all purposes by four families, in which clothes were hung to dry on four days a week, except when two families washed on the same day. To make matters worse, the yard was a thoroughfare. Stories without end, of a similar kind, might be gathered from all parts of the Connexion. If the ministers were saints, their wives must have been angels.

Even worse was the furniture often to be found in these preachers' houses. And this was not always the fault of the people. The system must be credited with a good deal of the blame, if blame there be. A long, small family, and not uncommonly they were both long and small in those days, was apt to make havoc of the not very substantially made circuit furniture, and from lack of circuit funds and other causes the incoming minister would sometimes find a sorry state of affairs. Of course, there were strict regulations about leaving a house

in good condition, but when the varieties of even sanctified human nature are considered, to say nothing of the infinite diversities of taste and domestic capabilities, it will be recognised that no regulations that the wit of man could devise would ensure that a preacher would always find a satisfactory state of affairs awaiting him on his advent in a new circuit. All this, together with the fact that members and officials alike had, for the most part, been recently lifted out of the gutter, so to speak, must be taken into account. In the early days the preachers and their wives discovered how much it was possible to go without.

The Minute Books of the Quarterly Meetings would of themselves afford ample evidence of the scanty furnishing of the preachers' houses. The Archbishop of Canterbury in those days had a splendid palace. Contrast it with the home of the Primitive Methodist minister of that circuit as revealed by the following minute: "That as there is only one bed in the preacher's house, and that is only large enough for children, the preacher be allowed to spend £2 in getting another, and that special collections be made all over the circuit to raise the money."

William Clowes's son-in-law discovered, on taking his bride to their new station, that there was no home provided for them. "The preacher's house had been given up, and all the furniture to be found was stowed away under the circuit steward's bed."

Another minister, "getting the circuit" on, removed to a better house. He personally transported the furniture to his new abode, a wheelbarrow sufficing for the most of it. As he wended his way through the streets he observed the Wesleyan minister in the distance, and for the credit of the Connexion he slipped behind a wall till his ministerial brother had passed by.

"My dear, this is a poor beginning," said a young minister to his bride as they surveyed the furnishing of their new home, which consisted of a bed, a few chairs, a table, one spoon, a few cups and saucers, but no carpet, no table-cloth, no window blinds. "I don't mind a bit," was the bride's brave reply. "We have each other, and that is enough." The pair happily had a sense of humour, and so, at the September Quarterly Meeting, they invited a few well-to-do officials to tea, and provided them with an excellent spread. The tiny room was filled. Having used the metal spoon, *the circuit's property*, the minister gravely passed it round to each in turn for use. After that there was a speedy transformation, and at the end of the year a removal to a better house, which, though poor enough, was a palace in comparison with the first. "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content," was the young preacher's text at this time, and that sermon may be found in one of the old magazines.

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Romance of the Chapels of the Denomination	219
The First Chapel	219
Curious Temporary Places for Worship	220
Historic Buildings Acquired	221
The Romance of Securing Sites	222
Removing a Stumbling-Block	222
A Clergyman's Gracious Offer	222
The Most Romantic and Dramatic Story of All	223
Lord Palmerston and the Primitives	225
Willie Wilkinson and the Duke of Cleveland	226
How the Chapels were Built	228
Paying off the Debt.	230
The Architecture of the Early Chapels	230

CHAPTER XII.

OF ITS CHAPELS.

THERE is no more interesting and romantic chapter in the history of Primitive Methodism than the story of its chapels. The subject would need a volume to itself, and a very large one, to do it anything like justice. A Church raised out of the ground, so to speak, and consisting at the outset of the poorest people, has, in the course of a century, acquired chapel property worth close upon five millions sterling, on which the debt is only about one-fifth of the total cost. It is quite impossible to tell the story of even a hundredth part of this remarkable achievement. The humble beginnings of this work were characteristic and typical of much that happened in the early years.

The first chapel was built at Tunstall, and the following extracts from Hugh Bourne's Journal indicate the various stages of the work: "May 10th, 1811. We were at Tunstall, and had much conversation about a chapel there. May 13th.—We fixed upon a piece of land to build a chapel on. June 6th.—We broke ground for a chapel. June 11th.—We signed the writings and secured

the land." The whole thing was an experiment that many declared would end in failure. When the time came for signing the deed, all refused, except the brothers Bourne, so the chapel was vested in them, and so continued till another chapel was required. The building was sixteen yards by eight, and so constructed that it could readily be turned into cottages, should it prove a failure as a chapel. It was neither ceiled nor plastered. Its successor to-day, in which the great Centenary public meeting was held, will accommodate a thousand worshippers, and as many Sunday School scholars.

As the Connexion spread chapels were acquired slowly. It was one thing to open a preaching place in some cottage, another to build a chapel. In many places the most serious difficulty was to obtain a site. In every part of the country, and almost in every circuit, stories abound in regard to the refusal of landowners to part with land for a chapel. There are scores of parishes to-day where Methodism has never been able to obtain a footing for this very reason. In hundreds of others the work had to be carried on for years in cottages and rented rooms. All kinds of odd buildings were utilised in the first instance. As a shelter from the winter's storms and cold, the people were glad to avail themselves of an old shed, a barn, a stable, a disused blacksmith's or joiner's shop, a warehouse, or an unlet cottage. Upper

rooms were often requisitioned, where the noise and odours of the cattle beneath were anything but pleasant. Here the work was carried on, sometimes for long years, before a site could be obtained or the cause became sufficiently strong to warrant the building of a chapel.

Cottages turned into chapels had often little or nothing to distinguish them from ordinary dwelling-houses, so far as the exterior was concerned. As a result, it often enough happened that while a religious service was in progress, or a Quarterly Meeting was occupied with its deliberations, the door would be thrust open and an enquiry made after rags and bones, or whether any of the varied wares of the pedlar were required.

In purchasing old places of worship from other denominations, buildings historically famous were acquired. The chapel at Burslem had been previously in the possession of three different denominations, and for some occult reason was commonly known as "The Salt Box." At Hockley, Nottingham, the Wesleyan chapel was bought, and if John Wesley had been wont to occupy its pulpit, Alexander Kilham, the founder of the Methodist New Connexion, was interred in its graveyard. Chapels where once ministered men so diverse as George Dawson and Rowland Hill, have become mission centres for Primitive Methodism. The same is true of the chapel where once worshipped Daniel Defoe, the author of *Robinson Crusoe*.

Perhaps the most romantic stories are associated with the acquisition of sites. It has always been easier to get a site for a public-house than for a chapel. Happily that is not likely to be so any longer. The difficulty has generally been due to the fact that all the land belonged to one person, whose objection to any form of Dissent made him anxious to keep a chapel off his estate. The squire and the parson could not always keep the "Ranters" out of the parish, but they could see to it that no land should be granted for the building of a chapel. It is in connection with the methods by which this difficulty was ultimately overcome that the romance comes in. There is the famous story of the members of the little society giving themselves to prayer for the removal of the stumbling block. Shortly afterwards the stumbling block died, and his successor, learning of the people's prayers, made haste to grant land for a chapel, lest the same fate should overtake him.

At Tallarn Green, Flintshire, a much desired site of land could only be obtained by securing the assent of certain members of the parish church. The clergyman of the parish drew up the conditions, which specified that the purchasers should attend Holy Communion in the parish church, accept confirmation by the bishop, receive preliminary instruction to fit them for this ordeal, give a pledge to attend the church service every Sunday morning, and, last but not least, recognise the spiritual

headship of the clergyman, and give an undertaking to keep him acquainted with all matters of general concern in which the Methodist brotherhood might interest itself. It is scarcely necessary to add that the offer was politely declined. Under the shadow almost of Canterbury Cathedral, the people at Pelham were for years compelled to worship in an old quarry. At length they secured a chapel, and although it was half-a-mile away, it was soon filled.

Perhaps the most striking and dramatic story of this kind ever told was that which recently appeared in the pages of the "Aldersgate," all the facts of which were carefully verified. In its earlier features the story is familiar enough. We have the usual attempts to stamp out the pestilent Primitives from a village well known in East Anglia. Villager after villager was threatened for allowing services in his house, and intimidated. But at length a family proved recalcitrant. It was decreed that they must go, and one night, when the son returned from work, it was to find his family and furniture turned into the street. "Never mind, Robert, my boy," said his mother, "I've got your bread and milk ready for you, and after supper we will have a prayer meeting. The Lord will take care of us." The prayer meeting was held under the broad canopy of heaven, and the mother's prayer was short and to the point: "Lord, send James Weston to me. He has an empty cottage that does not belong to

Lord ———." The prayer was answered, James Weston arrived, and to his empty cottage in the next village the outcasts removed.

Many hands generously helped to put the empty cottage in repair. And so the village was rid of the pestilent Primitive family that had dared to disobey his lordship. But at a price. "Mark my words," said the mother to the steward who superintended the eviction, "those that have done this day's work will rue it, and will be rotting in their graves when I and mine are doing good in the world." And it was so. Within a year his lordship died. His son committed suicide, and the death of his successor was as tragic. And every man who shared in that day's work was overtaken by disaster. The estate carpenter who did the work, the constable who assisted, the steward who superintended—dire misfortune overtook them all. Years afterwards, when the steward met the boy Robert, now a travelling preacher, the wretched invalid, a broken, miserable man, would say, remembering the mother's words: "It was not I, Mr. C., it was his lordship."

To return to the family in the next village. The old work of persecution was soon resumed. One man who entertained the preachers was cast out of his home and had to take refuge in the workhouse. The once evicted family came to the rescue, "and so the ark found rest and abode a long time." But the owner, Richard Weston,

was drawing near the grave, and Robert's mother was anxious that a chapel should be built. She sent for her landlord and begged him to grant the site where the cowshed stood for a chapel. The request was granted. But how were bricks to be got for a chapel? Every brick-kiln for miles was owned by the enemy. A prayer meeting was once more held, and the answer came in the astute proposal of one present. "You know I work on that brick-kiln, and the boss won't sell us bricks. But I know the firm that's his best customer. The boss won't go against them and offend his best customer, however much he detests us. Let's get that firm to build the chapel!" And they did. The chapel was built, and the heroic old woman, whose days and nights were now spent propped up in her chair, was carried by devout men to the opening. Now hear the *Nunc dimittis* of the aged saint: "O Lord, I'm very thankful. My boy's in the ministry, my man's in heaven, you've let us have a chapel. You've done everything I wanted you to, and I'm very thankful." "Now carry me home," she said to those who had borne her thither, "I shall be in glory before morning." And she was.

In pleasant contrast to this is the conduct of Lord Palmerston, when application was made to him for a site of land in Erewash Valley, Derbyshire. The Rev. William Carthy and Mr. J. Bailey were invited to wait upon his lordship at his residence in Northamptonshire at seven o'clock in the morning.

He received them most cordially, asked them to breakfast with the distinguished party staying with him, and treated them as honoured guests. The minister gives a most humorous account of the perplexity which beset the two plain Primitives in regard to the precise etiquette of the Prime Minister's breakfast table. Happily they got through the ordeal with complete success, Lord Palmerston chatting with them the whole of the time on trade, politics, religion, and especially Primitive Methodism. After breakfast he informed them that the land belonged to Lady Palmerston, and handed them over to her ladyship, with the injunction that they were to stay as long as they pleased. Lady Palmerston was courtesy itself, and astonished her visitors by her knowledge of Primitive Methodism. She granted the land at once and made arrangements for its being staked out.

Occasionally it happened that the difficulty in obtaining a site was due to the intolerance of an agent, and when the applicants managed to get past the understrapper to the great man himself, all trouble was at an end. The most amusing case of the kind is that at Bowlees, near Middleton-in-Teesdale, originally told by the Rev. Robert Clemitson. All memorials to the owner of the desired land, the Duke of Cleveland, had been fruitless. After much prayer, a sturdy dalesman connected with the society, Willie Wilkinson, resolved to present his plea personally to the

landlord, shrewdly suspecting that as yet his Grace knew nothing of the matter. The Duke was staying with a shooting party at High Force Inn, and Willie Wilkinson was, of course, refused admission. Brushing past the man in buttons, Willie made his way to the ducal presence, and began the interview by grasping his Grace's hand, with the inquiry :

"Hoo aire ye Mister Deuk, an' hoo's Missis Deuk ? "

Happily the Duke was not without a sense of humour, and took in the situation, so that Willie was desired to state his business.

"Ah want a bit o' grund, Mister Deuk, to beeld a Primitive Methodist cheppel on. An' it's nut the furst time we've axed for't nowther, Mr. Deuk. Ah've sent pepper efter pepper myself, an' nivver gitten ony word back."

The agent was present and admitted the truth of the statement, excusing himself on the ground that he had never deemed it of sufficient importance to lay before his Grace.

Willie could contain himself no longer. "Ah olways thowt that that was t' way on't. Ah've nivver spoken to ye in my life afore, but ah was sure ye were a decent sooart of a man. Ah olways thowt it was them nasty bodies aboot ye."

Willie intimated further that if they could get a few poachers converted in the new chapel, his Grace would be "obleeged" to them,

"You shall have a piece of land, most certainly, my man," said the Duke.

"Thank ye, Mister Deuk," was Willie's prompt response.

"Where would you like to have it?"

"Mister Deuk," replied Willie, in his most insinuating manner, "there's a bit o' grund doon yonder i' the corner of the pastur', it grows nowt, it nivver grow'd nowt, it grows nowt but steanes, but it'll du varra weel fur a cheppel."

The Duke promptly granted the site, and at once instructed his agent to meet Willie at nine o'clock next morning to stake out as much land as Willie desired. Willie was on the spot in good time, with a bundle of stakes ready for staking out. Presently the steward arrived.

"Thoo's cum then," was Willie's caustic greeting. "Ah thowt thoo wad come. Thoo dudn't dar but cum when t' Deuk tell't thee. Bat ah hev' thee noo. Dis ta see them stobs? Thoo'll put them in just where ah tell thee. T' Deuk said ah was to hev' as much grund as ah wanted."

Meekly the agent followed Willie from point to point, until an ample site had been staked out, and Bowlees chapel stands to-day a monument of the sturdy dalesman's "holy boldness."

Land having been obtained, the next difficulty was to find the money for a chapel. And for a poor people this was often a serious matter. Here again a volume is needed. The story of the

ingenuities, the toils, the self-sacrifices, the hopes and fears, the trials and triumphs associated with the erection of the five millions worth of church property possessed by Primitive Methodism, is full of romance. It is at once a revelation of the fine quality of the religious life of the men and women who have built this church, and an indication of some of the forces that have contributed to their own making. To the poor trustees and members, the little chapel stood for the Connexion. It was the centre of their dearest hopes. Zion and her bulwarks were never more to the ancient Jew than the little sanctuary to the Primitive Methodist in thousands of the villages and hamlets of England during the nineteenth century. How he rejoiced when at last, after long waiting, a site was obtained. For eighty-eight years the church at Appleby, North Lincolnshire, had no home but a cottage. The whole parish belonged to one owner, and three proprietors in succession refused to grant land for a chapel till some three years ago. Can the feelings of the men and women who had grown aged and grey in the service of that little church be imagined when at last a site was obtained? Then how in thousands of cases the people looked forward to the stone-laying, and next the opening of the new chapel. What planning, what saving, what toiling, what sacrifices and what prayers went to the building of the little place, which was, perhaps, only a few

yards square! And when it was opened, what gladness prevailed throughout the entire community. The most popular preachers of the Denomination would be summoned to preach the opening sermons, and if souls were converted it was felt that the effort had been crowned in the truest sense.

Then, often, quite as much romance went to the paying for the chapel as the building of it. In the early days the poverty of the people compelled them to build on faith very largely. It needed no small faith and audacity to shoulder such a burden as was involved. The mysterious entity, known as "the trustees," nominally bore the responsibility. They legally held the property and managed its affairs, and their anxieties in connection with the payment of interest and of debt were sometimes extreme. But the little church invariably stood at their back and shared the difficulties. Occasionally through fluctuations of trade the trustees dwindled by removals to a small number, and the property might be imperilled. Then "the Connexion" would come to the rescue and make some provision for saving at once the property and the honour of the Church. And so, bit by bit, Primitive Methodism has acquired property to the value of five millions sterling.

What wonderful structures were built or acquired in many places. Various exigencies and much individuality have determined the architecture of these sanctuaries. "A poor thing, but mine own,"

every Primitive Methodist might have said. The early chapels were plain in the extreme. Gothic was never thought of. The Methodist Chapel was designed for very practical purposes. To get a cheap, serviceable building to hold as many people as the necessities of the case demanded, and so constructed that the congregation could see and hear the preacher, were the considerations that influenced the builders. Tall, box-like pulpits, narrow, high-backed pews, if pews could be afforded at all, and occasionally a gallery that constituted the whole sitting accommodation, were common features. There were square chapels, oblong chapels, triangular chapels, chapels round, octagonal and many other shapes, and chapels so curiously constructed that the preacher could have shaken hands with the people in the front gallery. The people built where they could, and as often as not, in a back street, or a position to which access could only be obtained down a narrow, dark passage. And such names as Ebenezer, Bethesda, Bethel, Zoar, Zion, were often carved on the front of the building to express the feelings of the builders.

These chapels were built to the glory of God, and the men and women who gave their lives to the work of building and maintaining them have shown what voluntary effort can do; and have, in this noble work, not only done much to develop their own characters, but have aided the extension of the Kingdom of God.

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Oratory of the Last Century . . .	233
In What Sense Early Primitive Methodism Produced Orators	233
John Flesher's Ability and Pulpit Power .	234
Sketch of William Sanderson	237
In What Sense Sanderson was Original . .	238
Robert Key's Wonderful Oratory . . .	239
Flesher and Key Contrasted	240
Henry Hebbron's Style of Oratory. . .	241
Hebbron's Influence on the Platform . .	242
The Orators of a Later Time	243

CHAPTER XIII.

OF ITS ORATORS.

IT is often said that oratory has died out in these later days. Of the grand *ore rotundo* style of oratory, this is true. William Ewart Gladstone was almost the last of that wonderful race. Oratory such as survives to-day is less measured, less artificial, and less impassioned. We hear no more the rolling periods, the carefully balanced sentences, the exquisite cadence, the splendid perorations that thrilled the generations familiar with Robert Hall, Thomas Chalmers, Edward Irving, Henry Melville, and William Morley Punshon. And in this sense Primitive Methodism has not produced many orators. Its purpose was too practical for that, and the classes to whom it appealed in the first instance could not have appreciated the oratory of the schools.

But if it did not foster the highly polished rhetoric of the cultured orator, it demanded an oratory of another kind; and within its own limits that oratory was of a most striking and effective order. If conviction, persuasion, action are the true ends of rhetoric and oratory, then the early preachers of Primitive Methodism were indeed masters of these arts. They had a very definite

object in view—to convince men of sin, to bring them to a knowledge of the truth, to secure their immediate acceptance of the Gospel offer of salvation. All their powers were concentrated on this object. To fail in this was to fail in everything. If their audiences had been of a more intellectual cast, some of them might have produced sermons that would have been regarded as models of argument and rhetoric. Not the love of fame, but a passion for saving men, was the motive which governed them in their style of oratory. And they succeeded. In their own style they became masters of assemblies. They held listening multitudes spell-bound. They saw sinners fall before the onset of their oratory as corn before the sickle. Multitudes were arrested, convinced, and won to Christ.

By common consent John Flesher is regarded as the greatest orator Primitive Methodism has produced. His ministry began in 1821, and he was superannuated in 1852. He became Connexional Editor, and seems to have been a man of beautiful character and singularly attractive personality. He was, too, a man of commanding ability. In connection with an estate, a sum of £50,000 was sought to be divided among the five executors. To this Mr. Flesher objected, although himself an executor. He threw the estate into Chancery, conducted his own case by permission of the Lord Chancellor, with fourteen barristers on the other side, and won it. The Lord Chancellor warmly

congratulated him on his triumph, and commended the noble principles by which he had been actuated.

A competent writer, not belonging to the Denomination, has left a striking pen and ink sketch of this remarkable man. From this we learn that his voice was of unusual compass—audible in a whisper, musical in all its tones, and peculiarly adapted to the expression of the stronger feelings. His articulation was extraordinarily rapid and distinct: more rapid than Parsons, more distinct than Hall, and saved from monotony by an almost matchless power of inflection. His every motion in the pulpit was full of grace. "Think of a preacher whose inmost soul obviously sympathises with every word he utters, whose power of declamation surpasses anything you have ever witnessed, and whose hearers are frequently suffused in tears—one portion of them in tears of agony and distress, the other in tears of gratitude, joy, and exultation." All this we are assured only gives an approximate idea of John Flesher in the meridian of his powers—for there is something in eminent oratorical genius that baffles description. "From his first word his hearers are spell-bound; they stir not hand or foot. Every word has its place; no word is inconveniently slow in taking its place; there are no breaks in the style; his words succeed each other with unfailing certainty, like some of the more rapid processes of nature. He is to a great extent a self-taught man, but you hear none of that magniloquence which is

often the besetting sin of persons who have not had an academical training. You do not find much in the orator of rhetorical device. He very rarely attempts to carry a post by a *feint*. He is a great master of Saxon, and speaks with the strictest grammatical accuracy; his style is plain almost to baldness, but it flows onward like a perennial spring, and every word tells. He succeeds equally in the pulpit and on the platform, but his predilections are all on the side of the pulpit. Has he occasion to conduct his hearers through a process of reasoning, no speaker ever was more sure of *conviction*. Does his subject lead him to expostulate, no one ever expostulated more *persuasively*. Does he declaim, it is done with such force that you wonder how an individual should, in the narrow space of a life-time, acquire facility in aught besides."*

With exceptional logical and argumentative powers, for the sake of usefulness and having regard to the character of his audiences, John Flesher deliberately chose the declamatory, the picturesque, the pathetic style of preaching. An extraordinarily animated speaker, there was never discernible in him the slightest straining after effect. His sentences might be short and delivered like pistol shots, or long and slightly involved, but they were always absolutely luminous. If he ventured on elaborate apostrophe, as he occasionally did, the hazardous proceeding was managed with

* United Methodist Free Church Magazine, 1859.

infinite tact and complete success, and nothing could have been more matchless than the ease and effectiveness of his dramatic passages; while from first to last the stream of his strong, nervous Saxon poured forth as from an oracle. It is no doubt significant of much that one of the most consummate pulpit orators of the latter half of the nineteenth century should have been practically unknown beyond the bounds of his own Denomination.

The orator, like the poet, is born, not made. Whatever culture and training may do, they cannot supply the qualities indispensable to the true orator. The orators of Primitive Methodism have not been without training. They subjected themselves to much severe discipline, and in actual public speaking they secured a training far more valuable than the mere culture of the schools. But to begin with they were all natural orators; and if their lot had been cast in one of the older Churches, their fame would have been much wider. William Sanderson, whose name has so often been coupled with that of Flesher, belonged to this class. While inferior in some respects to his friend Flesher, he ordinarily reached a level of sustained power to which his great compeer did not attain. He was incapable of the lofty flights of chastened and splendid eloquence of which Flesher was such a master on great occasions; but with him the favourable circumstances which showed him at his best were almost the rule.

To begin with, William Sanderson possessed that usual attribute of the born orator, a fine voice. It was like "a peal of silver bells," singularly sweet and musical, and this sweetness was retained to the very loftiest note in the gamut of his speech. When raised to its most powerful tones, so as to be heard at a great distance, it was still musical and full of tenderness and pathos. Often his eloquence rose to a majesty and grandeur that held his hearers spell-bound. With all the silvery sweetness of his voice and spirit, he possessed a considerable gift of scorn; and, on occasion, could overwhelm with ridicule the follies and fallacies of the enemies of the Gospel. Ordinarily, the river of his speech flowed on in unvarying beauty and power. The right word was always there at the right moment; the superfluous word conspicuous by its absence. Now and then the river became a torrent that swept everything before it; the voice rose to its loftiest pitch, yet gaining thereby in sweetness and music; the face of the speaker was illumined with a radiant smile, and the audience was captivated as by the spell of a magician.

If not a profound or original preacher, William Sanderson possessed the skill and insight which enabled him to give point and power to truths that had been long known but not really felt or accepted. And after all that is originality. The thought which genius puts into words has occurred to multitudes. Hence a proverb has been defined as

"the wit of one and the wisdom of many." It is the province of genius or originality to express the familiar thought in words of such simplicity, fitness, and inevitability, as make it vocal, axiomatic, memorable. In the case of William Sanderson, these fresh conceptions of Divine truth received an additional charm from the living voice: the splendid delivery, the devout spirit, the clearness and felicity of the enunciation, and the fervour and unction which accompanied the word, arrested attention, and produced such impressions that strong men would often weep like children.

In the galaxy of orators which Primitive Methodism has produced, there is a delightful and even striking variety; and the third master of assemblies who swayed multitudes differed widely from the two already introduced. Robert Key has been sketched as one of the pioneers in an earlier chapter, so that only a brief reference need be made to him here as an orator. Because his vocation was so largely that of the pioneer, he was compelled by the necessities of his work to subordinate everything to immediate spiritual results. Mere intellectuality would never have had the slightest impression on the people with whom he had to deal in the earlier years of his ministry. This is true, no doubt, to a greater or less degree of all the orators of this Church. Their aim was intensely practical, and their sermons were built

expressly for the purpose of securing the conviction and conversion of men who could only be arrested by a vivid and realistic presentation of Gospel truth. Even Flesher, brilliant as he was as an orator, and chaste and silvery in style, deliberately cultivated for practical purposes a style widely different from that he would have chosen had he felt free to follow his mental tastes and proclivities. And Robert Key was still more under a sort of compulsion to study immediate effect in his public efforts. Flesher managed to live a studious life in spite of the strenuous times in which his lot was cast Connexionally, and his splendid orations would have been useless in East Anglia. Robert Key moved in a "region of storms, where human crime and wickedness had reached their climax of turpitude and surging wrong, and the wild elements demanded some master-spirit to confront and control them." Flesher has been compared to a majestic river flowing onward with ease and resistless might through fertile plains and flowery meads. Key was a rushing mountain torrent, sweeping over rocks and crags with thunderous roar, impetuous and irresistible as an avalanche. He swept over his audiences in a torrent of emotion. His emotions were of almost titanic force ; a storm of feeling seemed to be bursting from his heart. And instead of seeking to restrain that feeling, he gave it full play, the sentences rushing out as on the wings of emotion, while argument, illustration,

appeal, and the most vivid word-pictures rolled forth in a ceaseless torrent.

Contemporary with Flesher, Sanderson, and Key, was another pulpit orator, whose popularity was equal, if not superior, to that of any of the three. Perhaps no preacher in Northern Primitive Methodism ever attained to so vast a popularity as Henry Hebbron. He cannot be compared, but would rather have to be contrasted with, the three men already sketched. He was indeed *sui generis*, as may be inferred from the fact that mental fertility, imagination, wit, and humour were his striking characteristics at a period when these qualities in the pulpit were looked at somewhat askance. He approximated more closely than any of his contemporaries to the modern style of oratory. His style was simple, terse, vigorous, idiomatic, and everything artificial was resolutely eschewed. Avoiding the discussion of abstract theological questions, his appeal was to the great common heart of the people, and he always dealt with subjects familiar to the religious consciousness of his hearers. His sermons and addresses were pointed, practical, direct, and abounded in happy illustrations drawn almost exclusively from the ordinary scenes of social and domestic life. When dealing with the grandeurs and sublimities of religious thought, he still, occasionally, retained his simple, idiomatic style. His fine head, his handsome features radiant with geniality and benignity,

his large and lustrous eyes, the ease and readiness of his utterance, the exuberance of his fancy, the sportiveness of his wit and his commanding presence, all contributed to the effectiveness of his oratory. A man of immense bulk—towards the latter part of his active ministry he weighed some twenty stones—a first glimpse of him did not give much promise to the stranger. A dalesman, seeing him ascend the pulpit in very deliberate style, remarked to himself that not much would be got from so lazy a man. But the opening sentence of the address captured the critic, and from that hour he was Henry Hebbron's enthusiastic admirer.

In the pulpit or on the platform, Hebbron swayed an influence that was nothing short of kingly. But the latter enabled him to give the rein more freely to his wit and fancy. "His speeches were seldom premeditated; they gushed spontaneously, like mountain springs. Fact, fancy, and feeling were woven by his genius into a strangely beautiful tissue, setting at defiance, and sometimes far transcending, the ordinary rules of speech-making. His windings, his transitions, his alternations, resembled the fantastic outflow of some mountain stream; and as that stream at once beautifies and fertilises the landscape, so the flow of his speech adorned and enriched the devious tracts of thought he pursued. From grave to gay, from lively to severe, he solicited and evoked the most diverse moods of feeling, now provoking uncontrollable laughter, now melting into tears."

Many others of outstanding oratorical gifts cannot receive detailed description here: Jeremiah Dodsworth, whose books, "The Eden Family" and "The Better Land," were remarkably popular; William Harland, a Connexional Editor, who for many years was one of the most popular preachers and platform speakers in the Connexion, often moving vast multitudes by his Camp Meeting sermons and extemporaneous addresses; the brothers Antliff, who will be referred to in a subsequent chapter; Thomas Newell, whose massive sermons delivered with great fervour and unction won for him a high reputation in Yorkshire and the North; Dr. Joseph Wood, whose silvery speech and great preaching gifts enabled him to render distinguished service in establishing the Sunday School Union; Hugh Gilmore, already referred to; James Travis, still our Grand Old Man; William Jones whose eloquence flashed and coruscated in brilliant periods; Thomas Guttery, whose eloquent sermons and brilliant lectures charmed thousands on both sides of the Atlantic; and last, but not least, his son, Arthur T. Guttery, happily still with us in the fulness of his powers, who, as a pulpit and platform orator, has won a national reputation such as no Primitive Methodist ever gained before. These are only a few of the men who by their consecrated gifts of oratory have swayed a commanding influence over vast numbers of people, and have done much to build up the Kingdom of God.

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Three Garners	246
John Garner's Life and Labours	246
William Garner's Culture and Services	248
James Garner's Versatility	249
The Antliff Family	250
The Home of the Antliffs	251
William Antliff's Gifts and Services	251
Samuel Antliff's Fame and Achievements	252
J. Cooper Antliff's Work in Britain and Canada	254
The Kendall Family	254
Charles Kendall's Life and Writings	255
H. Bickerstaffe Kendall's Preaching and Literary Gifts	256
The Hodges of Hull	257
The Hartley Family	259
Robert Hartley's Work in Australia	259
The Dinnicks, Picketts, and Bowrans	260

CHAPTER XIV.

OF ITS DISTINGUISHED FAMILIES.

GREAT gifts do not often run in families. Cromwell might nominate his son as his successor, but he could not endow him with the mighty powers which had won and kept the rulership of England. More often than not the immediate descendants of the great are nonentities. There are exceptions, of course. The elder and the younger Pitt will at once recur to the mind; but the exceptions only prove the rule. It has not infrequently happened, however, that several members of the same family have been similarly gifted, and Primitive Methodism furnishes quite a number of examples of the kind. One wonders in reading the simple story of the conversion of the father or the mother, what would have been the history of the children if the Divine touch, through the instrumentality of Primitive Methodism, had not come to them. How fateful for the Garners, the Kendalls, the Antliffs, the Hartleys, the Hodges, was the first glow of the Divine spark in the homes where they were reared.

The large place the three Garners filled in the early life of the Connexion, and their unique position, may be gathered from the fact that they each occupied the Presidential chair more than once. John Garner, the eldest of the brothers, was, altogether, five times President of the Conference, three times in succession; while William and James twice held that honourable position; and one of them was four times, and the other twice, Secretary of the Conference. In the sixteen sketches of which the "Memorial of the Centenary of Hugh Bourne" is composed, two of the Garners have a place; and in a very much larger work, entitled "Methodist Worthies," the other brother comes immediately after the two founders of the Connexion. But for the fact that they were to be dealt with in this chapter, John and William might fairly have found a place among the pioneers of the Connexion.

The Garners came from the Vale of Belvoir, Nottinghamshire. Their connection with Primitive Methodism was not due to the parents apparently, as the father was a Baptist and the mother a Wesleyan Methodist. John, the eldest of the three, was induced to go and hear the early preachers of the new sect that had pushed its missionary operations to within a few miles of the place where he lived; and a year later, when seventeen years of age, he was converted under their labours. Within three months he preached his first sermon, his most astonished hearer being his brother William, of

whom he records a little later that after conducting a service at Ruddington, "my brother William was saved and made happy in the Lord."

Into the work of the ministry to which he was soon called, he threw himself with the utmost ardour and enthusiasm. Hugh Bourne records of him: "He is like a fire all through the country." By the time he had been only ten or eleven years in the ministry, his position was such that he was one of the four travelling preachers who, on the ground of seniority and respectable standing in the ministry, had their names entered in the legal document known as the "Deed Poll," by which the Denomination was enrolled in the Court of Chancery. When, in 1843, the Missionary Society was founded, John Garner was the first General Missionary Secretary.

He was a kingly man of commanding presence. He had a powerful constitution, a comely appearance and a magnificent voice. Though neither a scholar, a profound thinker, nor yet a man of high intellectuality, he had made the most of his powers, and was dowered with such moral and spiritual qualifications that his fame as a preacher spread in all the churches. At a great Camp Meeting he would make a wide circumference resound with his commanding voice, and thousands would listen with astonishment to his plain and powerful eloquence. During his ministry he saw thousands of souls added to the Church. The Connexion has

had many faithful servants, but for unselfish and unswerving devotion it has had none to surpass John Garner.

William Garner, the second of the three brothers, began to preach within six months of his conversion, and a year later was called into the regular ministry. From the beginning of his ministry he gave himself to the culture of his mind, and when journeys of fifteen or twenty miles a day to appointments involved a severe tax on the physical powers, and books were scarce and dear and salaries small, this involved a good deal of self-denial. It surely belongs to the realm of romance that a young minister in such circumstances should manage to write a commentary on the Pentateuch, a treatise on Preaching, and another on Logic. It is not surprising that freshness, charm, and literary grace characterised his pulpit ministrations. Yet his preaching was eminently practical, and he had no taste for metaphysical speculation or inflated grandiloquence. He possessed an uncommon share of humour, and on occasion could be terribly sarcastic. A Connexional lawyer, he left his impress on the rules of the Denomination, and for a hard student it is remarkable to find he was a devoted pastoral visitor, paying sometimes no less than thirteen hundred visits a year. This is all the more remarkable when we remember that his literary output was by far the largest of his time. He was an extensive contributor to the Connexional

periodicals, and the author of quite a number of books. Among these, his "Devotional and Practical Theology," and his official "Life of the Venerable William Clowes," were the most important. To be fairly estimated, these and his other works must be judged in the light of the conditions under which they were produced. Consecrating all his powers to God, few men have made a more effective use of their abilities and opportunities than William Garner.

It will have occurred to the reader that the two elder Garners were gifted with considerable versatility, and yet the youngest was the most all-round man of the three. James Garner excelled in every department of ministerial labour. His popularity as a preacher may be inferred from the fact that during his ministry he preached no fewer than 1,200 anniversary sermons and addressed 1,000 missionary meetings. Finely proportioned and above the average height, his appearance in the pulpit was dignified and prepossessing. He had a well-formed head, keen flashing eyes, under heavy eyebrows, and in his declining years a luxuriant snow-white beard. His sermons were felicitous alike in arrangement and diction, and his gift of humour was kept under strict control. His exceptional administrative gifts found ample scope in the office of General Committee Secretary. He rendered distinguished services in connection with the Friendly Society and the Insurance Company,

and few men whose speeches were marked by such singular brevity have wielded so remarkable an influence over the debates of Conference.

A diligent student, his literary success was more than equal to what he attained in preaching and administration. His "Biblical History and Biography," and his "Connexion of Sacred History," indicate his extensive reading, while his "Theological Dissertations" had a large sale and ran through several editions. These three brothers served Primitive Methodism with rare devotion, and with an unflagging energy and faithfulness seldom equalled and never surpassed. In return, the church loved them, trusted them, and bestowed upon them her highest honours; and in these Centenary years it is well that their worth and work should be recalled with admiration and gratitude.

For the greater part of half a century the Antliffs held a large place in the eye of the Connexion, and well deserve to rank among its distinguished families. They were all men of exceptional pulpit and administrative ability, and served the church in varied capacities at home and abroad. They were born leaders, and by reason of their intellectual ability, high character and power of initiative, were bound early to come to the front rank of the ministry.

The Antliffs became as well known as the Garners. The two brothers, William and Samuel, both attained

to the Presidency, the former twice, and both reached Connexional office. They were, first of all, eloquent and powerful preachers. It was almost impossible for a man to gain the front rank in the early days of the Connexion unless he possessed exceptional preaching gifts. The brothers Antliff were famous as pulpit and platform orators from one end of the Connexion to the other. They were both gifted administrators, and their powers of circuit management early gave them distinction; while in the larger field of Connexional affairs they wielded great influence over a long series of years. Diligent students from their youth up, their attainments were so respectable that the Degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon them in turn by American Universities. Their parents were humble, godly, and exemplary people in the village of Caunton, in Nottinghamshire. They were, moreover, devoted Methodists, and bequeathed to their sons a fine physique, features of a slightly Jewish cast, energy of character, quick perception, tenacity, self control, mental ability, humour, and intense religiousness. With such a heritage it is not surprising that the brothers became distinguished sons of their church and forces making for righteousness in the world.

Converted at nine years of age, and entering the ministry at sixteen, in 1830, William Antliff knew what pioneer work was, and as a circuit minister was remarkably successful. During his brilliant

term as Connexional Editor, two new magazines, the *Christian Messenger* and the *Child's Friend* were launched, and the magazine income was nearly doubled. When the Theological Institute was opened at Sunderland, in 1869, for the better training of the ministry, he was appointed the first Principal and Tutor, a position he held with usefulness and distinction for thirteen years. In 1871 he was elected a permanent member of Conference, and for thirteen years continued to wield great influence in the Councils of the Church. Among the most interesting incidents of his life, was the occasion when he conducted a lovefeast at the little chapel in his native village, his father in the pulpit with him, and his grandfather, who lived to be eighty-two, exclaiming: "What do my eyes see? and what do my ears hear? Not only my children, but my children's children, have arisen to call God blessed."

Samuel Antliff was converted at sixteen. Soon his name appeared on the plan, and sixteen months afterwards he entered the ministry. His first circuit was Chesterfield, and thither he walked, a distance of thirty miles, carrying with him his whole outfit. As a home missionary he laboured ardently, and was abundantly successful. His success in restoring wrecked circuits gave him some hard fields of toil, and it was only his wife's splendid management that served to keep the wolf from the door at times. At Mansfield his powerful preaching,

lecturing, and temperance advocacy brought him into public notice, and from that time his services were in constant request all over the land. His power in expounding the doctrines of grace was often irresistible, and whole congregations were often bathed in tears. If not so fluent as his brother, his matter was more weighty, and often the surging tide of emotion under which he spoke carried everything before it. In prayer he would pour out his whole soul in fervent petitions, till the people shook and trembled with emotion and broke out into audible sobs. He was a tremendous worker, and when he became Missionary Secretary in 1868, administered his department with a vigour that would have broken down many strong men. He reorganised the work, extended the sphere of operations at home and abroad, and increased the revenue in a degree that was a surprise even to himself. He had not a little to do with the founding of Elmfield College, the Sunderland Institute, and the Connexional Fire Insurance Company. In 1876 he visited our Churches in Canada and the United States, as well as New Zealand and the Australasian Colonies, and on his return was appointed Deputy Missionary Treasurer, Superintendent of the London Mission, and a year later was made Secretary of the Colonial Missions. This he resigned in 1881, and returned to circuit work in his native district. He celebrated his ministerial jubilee in 1891, amid universal congratulations, and was

appointed a delegate to the Methodist Æcumenical Conference in Washington in 1891, but owing to a serious illness which detained him at Montreal, was unable to attend the sittings. He remained, in his later years, a familiar figure at Conference, and though blind, was able to conduct a service from beginning to end with complete efficiency, announcing the hymns and reciting the lesson himself. A powerful preacher and temperance advocate, an ecclesiastical statesman, a keen politician of ever growing breadth and insight, and a gifted administrator, Primitive Methodism owes him more than it has ever realised. In 1892, full of years and honours, he passed to the higher service.

James Cooper Antliff was the son of William Antliff, and began his ministry in this country, but subsequently undertook an important charge in connection with our Church in Canada, and since Methodist Union there has been a distinguished minister of the Methodist Church of Canada. While superintending our Edinburgh Circuit he graduated M.A. at the University, the first minister of the Connexion to gain a University degree.

The Kendalls rank among the distinguished families of their church. The story of the conversion of Thomas Kendall has already been told, and the fact that six of his ten sons became preachers, while a son and a grandson became Presidents of

the Conference, the latter also Connexional Editor, subsequently Editor of the Review, and author of the monumental work on "The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church," is sufficient to confer distinction on the family. Charles Kendall, the most distinguished of the six preacher sons, was for many years a leading minister in the Hull District. An excellent superintendent, a powerful preacher, and an able administrator, it is not surprising that he reached the front rank. Then the author of those days always won a certain measure of respect and fame, and Charles Kendall possessed not only a large vocabulary, but the instinct for the right word, which Stevenson and Barrie have alike regarded as the Hall Mark of the literary gift. He was the biographer of Atkinson Smith and William Sanderson, and collaborated with his brother Henry in the production of "Strange Footsteps : or, Thoughts on the Providence of God." With Sanderson he originated and edited the first series of the "Primitive Pulpit."

Elected President of the Hull Conference in 1881, he witnessed the opening of the Manchester College, and spoke of the marvellous changes which the whirligig of time had brought about in the Connexional estimate of the value of ministerial education. He died during his Presidential year. His brothers Thomas and Dennis both became successful ministers, and through an itinerancy, the one of thirty-four and the other of forty-four

years, continued to spread ever wider and wider the influence of the open-air services which shaped the life-course of the humble village carrier, Thomas Kendall. Other three brothers, beginning their course as Primitive Methodists, entered the ministry of other churches; one of them, Henry Kendall, attaining to considerable influence as a Congregational minister in Darlington.

Charles Kendall's son, Holiday Bickerstaffe Kendall, B.A., began his ministry in Newcastle-on-Tyne, when a mere youth, and soon became known in the northern district as a preacher of singular freshness and charm. Quiet, meditative, mystical in the best sense, his pulpit oratory knew nothing of the rush and impetuosity of a Key, nor yet of the flowing eloquence and splendid rhetoric of a Flesher; but from many fields he poured out rich and varied treasure, as one who has gathered gems of thought now from classic lore and now from the last issue of the "Spectator." The thoughtful preacher-hearer found him a source of endless delight and of abject despair. He drank in the discourse as one tasting some choice vintage, but how could he find any satisfaction in his own poor productions after listening to such models of thoughtful and chastened eloquence. While stationed at the city of Durham, which is the head of a large colliery circuit, Mr. Kendall graduated B.A., doing at the same time, like Mr. Cooper Antliff in Edinburgh, the work of an ordinary travelling preacher. Some

years later he had a serious break-down in health and was superannuated. In 1892 he became Connexional Editor, and for the next nine years the magazines bore evidence of his culture and ability. On his retirement from the Editorship in 1901 he was elected President of the Conference, and superannuated a year later, owing to a throat affection. Then he devoted himself to the task of writing his monumental work: "The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church." About the same time he became Editor of the Quarterly Review, a position he still fills with usefulness and distinction.

Then we have the Hodges of Hull, whose name is so indissolubly associated with that Metropolis of Primitive Methodism. Little did William Clowes dream what immense material advantages were to flow from the event in 1820 he so simply chronicles. "At Kilnsea," he writes, "I preached in the house of Mr. W. Hodge, who had a large family of children, of whom many were converted, and some became preachers of the Word. Here I was kindly entertained." He could not foresee how much the five sons of Mr. W. Hodge—John, Thomas, William, Henry, and Samuel Hodge—would have to do with that extraordinary development of Primitive Methodism in Hull, especially in the direction of chapel building, which was to give us in that one town, before the end of the nineteenth century, property worth £100,000. If the Rev. John Bywater must be accounted the father of chapel building in

Hull, the Hodges must be credited with a large share in the nurture and development of the children of his mind and heart. In 1825 he found the few chapels filled to overflowing under the ministry of men like Clowes, Flesher and Sanderson, Harland and Lamb. The hour had come for extension, and the man. Bywater's insight and foresight, his blended prudence and audacity, were just what was needed for a forward movement, and Great Thornton Street and Clowes Chapels are magnificent monuments of his courage, his daring and faith. Amid unparalleled difficulties from the cholera on the one hand and a lawsuit on the other, he pressed forward and his work was crowned with success. Many obscure men nobly helped in the great undertakings, but the brothers Hodge gave with open hands, often £1,000 at a time, and Henry gave thousands to the Henry Hodge Memorial Chapel, while Hodgson Street and Kilnsea were built entirely at his own charge. William Hodge became Mayor of Hull, and had a great deal to do with the erection of the Clowes Memorial Chapel in Jarratt Street. Samuel Hodge was the father of Alderman George Hodge, who for many years took a leading part in the civic life of his native town. If many heroic men have had their share in the erection of the round score of splendid chapels the Connexion possesses in Hull, many of these sanctuaries could never have been built but for the wise and large-hearted generosity of the Hodges.

No name is so well known in Primitive Methodism to-day as that of Hartley, and in the Hartley College, and many another institution of our Church, it will be perpetuated in coming generations. But the youth of the Church do not know that the present holder of the name belongs to a distinguished Primitive Methodist family. Sir William P. Hartley's father was a devoted and stalwart Primitive Methodist who, apart altogether from the fact that he gave to his Church so great a son, deserved well of Primitive Methodism in Colne and the neighbourhood. Then Sir William's grandfather, William Hartley, was a noted local preacher in his day, and as a missionary in the Isle of Man won the highest respect and love of all who knew him by his self-sacrifice and devotion. He not only gave to our Church John Hartley, the father of the present knight, but a son to its ministry, in the person of the Rev. Robert Hartley, a famous minister and missionary, whose life reads like a romance.

Beginning his ministry in 1835, Robert Hartley knew something of the toils and hardships of the pioneer days. His high character and success led to his being requested twice to go to Australia as a missionary. On the second occasion he consented, and landed in Sydney in 1860. From that day to his death, thirty-two years afterwards, his life was one of heroic endeavour, unswerving loyalty, and marvellous success. Visiting this country in 1882

he was elected Vice-President of the Conference. Even after his superannuation he toiled incessantly in the service of his fellows, and was the best known and best loved man in Rockhampton. At his ministerial jubilee his fellow citizens presented him with a purse of gold. He preached twice on May 23rd, 1892, and passed away at midnight of the 25th, ceasing at once to work and live. All classes united in an immense concourse to pay him honour at his funeral. In three of our churches Memorial Tablets were placed, and the citizens of Rockhampton erected a Drinking Fountain as his Memorial. There he will long be remembered as a man of the noblest character, whose beautiful life of unselfish service won the hearts of all men. The work of Sir William P. Hartley will be dealt with in a later chapter.

Time would fail to tell of the Dinnicks, of whom at one time there were seven brothers in our ministry, one, William Dinnick, during a ministry of forty years, building twenty-three chapels and two manses, and largely clearing them of debt; of the five brothers Watkinson, of Grimsby, rendering varied and valuable service; of the brothers Pickett, one of them, James Pickett, ex-General Missionary Secretary and Ex-President of the Conference; another, Henry J. Pickett, Vice-Principal of the Hartley College; and a third, Frederick Pickett, an able and useful minister, all of whom came from an agricultural village and of an ancestry of which,

for its piety and devotion, any man might be proud ; and of the brothers Bowran, of Gateshead, of whom one is a distinguished minister of our Church, and well known in the literary world as "Ramsay Guthrie."

CONTENTS.

	Page
Revivals and Sacred Song	263
Each Revival Produces its Dominant Note .	263
The Dominant Note of the Early Hymns .	263
No Holiday Pic-Nic in Which the Pioneers Engaged	266
The Gospel Note Everywhere	267
Early Hymns Full of Personal Religious Experience	268
Effects on Persecutors	269
Sale of Hymn Books Helped Missions . .	270
Novelty of Early Tunes	270
How Tunes were Sometimes Obtained . .	270
A Chartist Hymn Parodied	271
George Borrow and Camp Meeting Singing .	273

CHAPTER XV.

OF ITS EARLY HYMNS AND TUNES.

EVERY great religious revival has given birth to its characteristic outburst of sacred song. The Reformation set all Germany singing Luther's hymns. In memorable words John Richard Green has told us how the revival, out of which Methodism sprang, originated a new musical impulse among the people, which gradually changed the face of public devotion in England. And the Camp Meeting Movement, which led to the formation of Primitive Methodism, called into existence yet another and highly characteristic style of sacred song. Just as in the Reformation hymns we hear the stern note of conflict merging into the triumphant strains of an all-conquering faith ; or as in Charles Wesley's hymns may be heard the ever recurring note of a personal religious experience : so in the hymns and tunes with which our fathers carried the evangel through the villages of England, the dominant note of battle and conquest was to be heard. Every hamlet they missioned rang with such martial sentiments as :

"I His soldier sure shall be
Happy in eternity,"

or

"Hark, listen to the trumpeters,
They sound for volunteers."

This martial spirit, too, was heard in the lines:

"Apollyon's armies we must fight
And put the troops of hell to flight,
To gain the heavenly land;
Come on ye soldiers in the rear,
Be stout and bold and never fear;
Come join the conquering band."

Yet again the same spirit is strong in the lines:

"We're fighting for our God,
Let trembling cowards fly;
We'll stand unshaken, firm and fast,
With Christ to live and die."

And the lines which Joseph Spoor struck up when an infuriated persecutor of immense physical proportions attacked him as he was conducting an out-door service at a village in the Brompton circuit:

"What a Captain I have got,
Is not mine a happy lot?"

express the same spirit. Just as the doubled fists of the disturber were within a few inches of the preacher's face, Spoor, as if by a sudden inspiration, commenced this martial song, the whole company

joining in; the furious man stood abashed, as if smitten with paralysis, and quietly allowed the procession to pass on. On every village green, almost, was to be heard the yearning cry, as if bursting from hearts full of a passionate desire to win men to Christ:

"O for a trumpet voice
On all the world to call,
To bid their hearts rejoice
In Him who died for all."

In the conflicts of persecution we find them over and over again singing:

"Wicked men I'm not to fear,
Though they persecute me here;
Though they may my body kill,
Yet my King's on Zion's hill."

Wedgwood sang it as they haled him away to the Guildhall for preaching at Grantham Cross. When the rowdies would have stopped Robert Key from preaching, the women joined hands round him, in a sort of ring close together, and sang these lines; and the persecutors dared not break through the charmed circle. Key himself, "as happy as a prince," sang them as he marched through a murderous mob on the famous occasion at Watton, when he narrowly escaped death and was rescued by some of the ringleaders, who suddenly changed sides and escorted him to safety, saying: "You are

right, sir, and we are wrong; and no man shall touch you." This hymn was sung, too, by Mr. John Bunn, as he entered the gig that was to take him to prison for ten days on a trumpery charge of obstructing the thoroughfare at West Row, near Newmarket. His friends would fain have joined in the song, but were bathed in tears. Small wonder the jailor said, on receiving the prisoner: "Sir, I'm astonished that they should send such a man as you here, and that for preaching." The Rev. W. G. Bellham, also, when arrested at Litcham as he was conducting a service, sang this hymn as the constable escorted him through the village, the whole population turning out to see and hear.

These soldiers of the Cross, if inspired with the hope of winning fair Canaan's land, had no idea that it was a holiday pic-nic on which they had set out: they were attacking an enemy's kingdom, and they must "push the battle to the gate." If, at the end of their warfare victory was to be theirs, it must be by means of supernatural weapons. Hence they sang:

"'Tis glorious hope upon my head,
And on my breast my shield;
With this bright sword I mean to fight
Until I win the field.
My feet are shod with Gospel peace,
On which I boldly stand;
And I'm resolved to fight till death
And win fair Canaan's land."

The fight no end could know till the final victory was won, and so the chorus of one of the old hymns rang with the lines :

"Fight on, fight on, fight on!
The crown will soon be given."

Yet after all these were not the most characteristic hymns of the movement. Its distinctive note was the Gospel call, preceded by the arresting command :

"Stop, poor sinner, stop and think,
Before you further go;
Will you sport upon the brink
Of everlasting woe?"

John Benton would address the careless with these lines with an accent and emphasis calculated to startle the most indifferent. But behind there always came the glad proclamation :

"Hark! the Gospel news is sounding:
Christ hath suffered on the tree;
Streams of mercy are abounding;
Grace for all is rich and free."

If the thunders of the law were always heard—and they were absolutely necessary if the masses of that day were to be awakened—they were quickly followed by the good tidings of the grace of God :

"The voice of free grace cries, 'Escape to the mountain,
For Adam's lost race He hath opened a fountain.'"

There was not the shadow of a doubt as to the extent of the provision thus made for the needs of men. In tones of exultant gladness, the missionaries sang :

"Grace is flowing like a river ;
Millions there have been supplied ;
Still it flows as fresh as ever
From the Saviour's wounded side :
None need perish ;
All may live for Christ hath died."

Through the narrow, quaint alleys of ancient towns and villages rang the invitation :

"Come ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore,
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love, and power."

And the invitation was always driven home with the rousing chorus :

"Turn to the Lord and seek salvation,
Sound the praise of His dear name ;
Glory, honour, and salvation,
Christ the Lord has come to reign."

As might be expected, these early hymns, used for evangelistic purposes, were full of definite personal religious experience. They were the expression of the experience of men who had secured the pearl of great price, the one thing needful, and who would fain induce others to enter into the same joy. Hence they sang :

"My heart is fixed, eternal God,
Fixed on Thee.
And my immortal choice is made,
Christ for me."

And what a fine testimony they gave in the lines:

"My soul is now united
To Christ the living vine;
His grace I long have slighted,
But now I feel Him mine;
I was to God a stranger,
Till Jesus took me in;
He freed my soul from danger,
And pardoned all my sin."

In hymns without number the invitation was given to share the glad experience of the singer:

"Come and taste along with me,
Glory, glory, glory;
Consolation flowing free,
Praise Him halleluia!"

Or yet again:

"I'm bound for the kingdom,
Will you go to glory with me?"

Occasionally the singing of one of these startling hymns produced a striking effect even on men bent on persecution. At West Row, near Newmarket, Mr. John Bunn found, on arriving at the spot where he had announced that he would conduct a service, a gallows had been erected. But he fearlessly faced both gallows and persecutors, and announced hymn number sixteen in the Small Hymn Book. As he sang:

"Now, poor sinner,
Look to Him who died for thee,"

the persecutors seemed thunderstruck, and he was allowed to preach in peace.

The hymn books of 1809, 1818, contained all these and many other hymns of which mention cannot be made here, and their immense popularity led to a very large sale, so that the profits made many of the missions self-supporting. To tell even a fraction of the incidents associated with these hymns would involve going over the history of the early days. When a new hymn book was published in 1825, the old small hymn book was bound up with it, so that many still recall the familiar announcement that a certain hymn would be found in the Large or the Small Hymn Book.

It was not merely the words of the hymns that took hold of the people: the novelty of the tunes, in the first instance, was often the great attraction. Such lilting tunes had never been heard in church or chapel before. In many instances they were already familiar, as having been sung in anything but sacred associations. The story is told of Henry Higginson, on his way to a tea meeting at Walsall, hearing a lad singing a tune which caught the preacher's fancy. The lad was induced, on promise of a penny, to sing it over again. At the close of the rehearsal, Higginson handed over the penny with the significant remark: "I've got the tune and the devil can take the words." Thus it came

to pass that the gladness of the heart expressed itself in the melody of the tunes quite as much as in the sentiment of the words sung.

Occasionally it was not only the tune that was "commandeered," but the words themselves were skilfully parodied, as in the Chartist hymn: "The Lion of Freedom." Chartism was occupying the minds of the people of Leicester to such an extent that there seemed no room for the Gospel message. Processions, imitating the tactics of the Primitives, swept the streets chanting:

"The Lion of Freedom is come from his den;
We'll rally around him, again and again:
We'll crown him with laurel, our champion to be:
O'Connor the patriot for sweet Liberty!"

William Jefferson, while in bed one morning, conceived the idea of borrowing the tune, which could not be beaten, and wedding it to new words. And so the Primitive processions in turn swept the streets singing:

"For the Lion of Judah shall break every chain,
And give us the victory again and again."

Then, to quote the words of the historian, "The Lion of Judah was successfully pitted against the 'Lion of Freedom'—Christ against Feargus O'Connor." It is impossible to describe the rapture with which the people sang the old hymns and tunes in the early days, or to set forth adequately what

these hymns and tunes did in ten thousand ways all over the land for the evangelisation of its villages and hamlets.

One specimen in illustration must suffice. One summer's day, in 1822, an aged woman tramped from Kendal to Carlisle, a distance of forty-four miles. Her object was to tell her relative in the border city of the blessing that had come to her through the "Ranters" and their "Small Hymn Book," a copy of which was her sole companion. The story of her conversion, coupled with an examination of the precious hymn book, the lively tunes of which were listened to with wonder and delight, led to the founding of Primitive Methodism in Carlisle, from which, as a centre, the new Evangelism spread to Brompton and Penrith and the five other circuits of West Cumberland, to the north as far as Glasgow, and even to yet more distant Canada. All the splendid work thus accomplished over this wide area is traceable to the humble, aged woman whose name is forgotten, who trudged cheerfully over the hills and moors of Westmoreland and Cumberland, clasping to her bosom her treasured copy of the "Small Hymn Book."

Of innumerable testimonies that have been given by persons of all classes as to the effect produced on the mind of the listener by the singing of the early days, perhaps none is so remarkable as that of George Borrow. Reference has been made in a former chapter to this famous passage, but only

part of it is there quoted. Here, not unfittingly, may be given the portion specially referring to the singing that Borrow heard that day. The occasion could only be a Norfolk Primitive Methodist Camp Meeting. "It was a strange sounding hymn, as well it might be, for everybody joined in it. There were voices of all kinds—of men, of women, and children—of those who could sing and those who could not; a thousand voices all joined, and all joined heartily. No voice of the multitude was silent save mine. The crowd consisted entirely of the lower classes, labourers and mechanics, and their wives and children—and when that hymn was over—and here let me say that, strange as it sounded, I have recalled that hymn to mind, and it has seemed to tingle in my ears on occasions when all that pomp and art could do to enhance religious solemnity was being done—in the Sistine Chapel, what time the papal band was in full play, and the choicest choristers of Italy poured forth their mellowest tones in presence of Batuscha and his cardinals—on the ice of the Neva, what time the long train of stately priests, with their noble beards and their flowing robes of crimson and gold, with their ebony and ivory staves, stalked along, chanting their Sclavonian litanies in advance of the mighty Emperor of the North and his Priberjensky guard of giants, towards the orifice through which the river, running below in its swiftness, is to receive the baptismal lymph."

CONTENTS.

	Page
Condition of the Country a Century Ago	276
Share of Primitive Methodism in Producing the Change	277
Relation to Temperance and Trades Unionism	278
Testimony of Thomas Burt, M.P.	278
Influence on Law and Order	279
Trade Union Leaders, Primitive Methodists	279
Courage Required to Champion Trades Unionism	280
House of Commons Records Quoted	281
The Despotism of Colliery Owners	281
Six Primitive Methodists Imprisoned	282
Work of Primitive Methodism in Rural England	283
Inculcation of Principles of Freedom	283
Serfdom and Degradation of Agricultural Labourer	284
Change Effected by Primitive Methodism	284
Farmer's Testimony to Robert Key	284
Canon Jessopp's Testimony	285
The Seven Men of Preston	286
Primitive Methodism and Passive Resistance	287
Primitive Methodism and the Free Church Federation	287

CHAPTER XVI.

OF ITS NATIONAL SERVICE.

SINCE Primitive Methodism began its work, an immense change has been witnessed in the social and political condition of the nation. The Democracy has come to birth, and if its work has not yet been fully accomplished, it has, at any rate, begun a great process of emancipation. The first Reform Bill was passed in 1832, but the influences which made it possible had been at work for twenty years. That brings us to the time when Primitive Methodism originated. At that period the masses of the people were in a condition of comparative serfdom. Even to-day, in many parts of the country, men can scarcely call their souls their own. The bitter opposition to Land Reform is due to the resolute determination of the land-owning classes to retain their control over the men who till the soil; and since no other chance of complete freedom offers itself, the peasantry of Britain continue to leave the land for the towns or the Colonies.

But one hundred years ago the condition of things was immeasurably worse. The great industries which have given employment to hundreds of thousands of our people in the towns were then only in their infancy, or not yet born. The agricultural labourer and the miner were the mere chattels of their masters. They had no share in the government of the country, and the entire conditions of their employment were determined by the will of their superiors. Freedom and independence in the true sense were unknown. The miner had to toil for eighteen hours a day; children of six and eight years of age were sent down the pit to work sixteen and eighteen hours at a stretch, and both for a mere pittance. All the regulations which now safeguard the life and economic independence of the miner were unknown. In many respects the condition of the agricultural labourer was worse. The only freedom which either miner or labourer enjoyed was the freedom to leave his employment, which might mean only freedom to starve.

All this is changed for the better, and although the agricultural labourer still waits for that complete enfranchisement which will make him a tiller of the soil with fixity of tenure, the forces which will assuredly enable him to attain this great freedom and place him securely on the land are in active operation. The miner, partly by reason of his concentration within limited areas, has been able

to unite with his fellow-miners in a common effort for securing his rights, and so has worked out his social and economic salvation.

Undoubtedly a great many factors have combined to secure the progress that has been made, and it were folly to attribute the advancement to any one cause. But there is abundant evidence that one of the most potent of these factors has been the influence of Primitive Methodism. Looking back over the past half century, we see clearly enough the varied forces that have been slowly yet surely working out the social and political emancipation of the masses of the people. What, however, is not often recognised, is the source of the original impulse which set these forces in motion. Who trained and inspired with the instinct of freedom the early leaders of Trade Unionism? Who fostered in the dark days of serfdom a healthy self-reliance and a manly independence? Who intervened in the days when rural England was seething with disaffection, and, securing the moral regeneration of the people, averted a bloody revolution and turned men's minds into the path of constitutional reform? The Primitive Methodists were largely instrumental in accomplishing all these things, as there is abundant evidence to show.

If among the miners of the North the Temperance Reformation and the Trade Union Movement have been the most effective social agencies for the

elevation of the people, it was the Primitive Methodists who from the first recognised the value of these movements and furnished the leaders which gave them character and ensured their success. Thomas Burt has testified in the pages of the Primitive Methodist Quarterly Review (July, 1882), that the Temperance movement acted as a stimulus to mental improvement and general elevation of character, and that the Primitive Methodists were not only the first in the colliery districts to throw open their chapels for Temperance meetings, but that the travelling and local preachers and members of the Connexion furnished the earliest and most successful advocates of the cause. He mentions George Charlton and George Dodds as going forth with all the burning zeal of apostles, visiting every scattered hamlet of Northumberland and Durham, and proclaiming the truths of Temperance to all who came within the reach of their voices.

But Mr. Burt maintains that "more clear and decisive still were the services rendered by Primitive Methodism to the Labour Movements and Trade Unions of the miners." As a religious agency, this Church was almost without a rival in the colliery villages. Remote from the centres of the Established Church, and apparently despised and forgotten by the other religious organisations of the time, the pit villages were in a condition little removed from barbarism. But they were

persistently missioned by the Primitive Methodists, who preached in the open air until some house or room could be obtained for their services. Later they began to build little chapels, which became centres of religious influence. At every such centre there would be a class leader, and perhaps one or more local preachers. The travelling preachers stationed at the nearest town or large village visited the pit villages for week night and occasional Sunday services, carrying to their people the means of spiritual culture and intellectual stimulus. In this way the whole social and religious tone of these villages was changed for the better.

But not only did the Primitive Methodists train their members, especially their local preachers, in the art of public speaking, they instilled into their minds the instinct of law and order, together with a love of freedom, and the spirit of democratic government. Here was a church which gave its laymen a larger share in its government than any other religious denomination in the country. Its whole genius was in favour of democratic institutions and against tyranny and class domination. It is not surprising, therefore, that in consequence of their high character, their intelligence, their gift of public speech, and their democratic sympathies, the Primitive Methodists became the leaders and representatives of the miners in their struggles for social and political improvement. But it needed no common courage to be a recognised leader in

those days. "Tyranny was rampant. Confiscation and robbery were the order of the day." As Mr. Burt has pointed out, "Petty despots, 'dressed in a little brief authority,' and puffed up with that 'insolence of office' which is so offensive to men of spirit, swaggered and domineered without let or hindrance." To be a leader of the miners was to be a marked man, to risk dismissal, to find every colliery for miles around closed against him.

All this the Primitive Methodists braved, and in consequence were called upon to taste the bitterness of practical outlawry and actual imprisonment. Mr. Burt has named several of them as leaders and speakers from the days of the first Reform Bill onwards: Thomas Hepburn, honest, brave, self-possessed, conciliatory in temper and of unimpeachable character—splendidly endowed by nature with nearly every quality necessary for leadership; Ralph Atchison, Charles Parkinson, Mark Dent, Robert Archer, John Tulip, and Thomas Pratt. These were the men who fostered the miners' union when it was in its infancy and struggling against fearful odds for official recognition. The champions of this new and dangerous innovation were opposed tooth and nail, and upon them was showered, by pulpit and platform, press and Parliament, every species of obloquy and misrepresentation. Worse still, they had often to face suspicion and indifference on the part of the miners themselves. The part played by the Primitive

Methodists was well recognised by those in authority at the time. Hunting among the musty records of the library of the House of Commons, Mr. Burt came across this interesting statement in regard to the parish of Earsdon : " There is no mining parish within these two counties, the people of which have given so much trouble to their employers, or have broken out into such violence, as this . . . . The people were under the influence of Chartist leaders, delegates from the colliers' unions, and their local preachers, chiefly of the Primitive Methodists." Of the Seaton Delaval Colliery it is recorded that " During the strike of 1844, the colliers, under the instigation of Chartists and local preachers, chiefly of the Primitive Methodists or " Ranters," showed so strong a disposition of violence, that half a company of infantry, some cavalry, mounted policemen, and special constables were established at the colliery." This indicates truly enough the position of leadership occupied by Primitive Methodist local preachers, but it is a gross libel, though unintentional, no doubt, to assert that these men encouraged violence and lawlessness. The Commissioner, as Mr. Burt points out, evidently retailed, without inquiry, the prejudiced stories of the colliery owners and officials.

At the same colliery, in 1859, an incident occurred which once more shows the part played by Primitive Methodists in the struggle for freedom and fair play. A merciless despotism sought to

grind the colliers into serfdom. Every resource of tyranny was employed. Fines were inflicted for trifling offences, or none at all. A hewer, on coming out of the pit after a hard day's work, would often find that his whole earnings had been taken from him, and that he was actually in debt. Deputations could not get civility even, and every man who spoke out was at once dismissed. Without giving notice the men decided to strike, which was then a criminal offence. Eight miners were immediately seized, tried, and sentenced to two months' imprisonment. These men were admittedly the most intelligent and respectable on the colliery, and had been chosen on that account, since "it would have been no punishment to imprison blackguards." Six of the eight were Primitive Methodists, and every one of them had voted against the strike and in favour of moderate counsels.

While in gaol the prisoners one Sunday had an extra service, owing to the presence of a visiting chaplain. A novel incident occurred at the close of the service. A prisoner rising, gravely proposed, in a neat little speech, a cordial vote of thanks to the preacher for his excellent sermon. This was seconded and unanimously carried. The chaplain, in reply, stated that during a long experience no such thing had ever happened to him before. The mover of the vote of thanks was Amos Eatherington, a highly respected Primitive Methodist local preacher. Mr. Burt also tells us that at National Conferences

of miners he discovered that many of the leading men from other parts of the country were Methodists, and he has been surprised to find how many of the leaders of the Unions had been brought under the same influence. It is evident that Primitive Methodism, while fostering the spirit of freedom and independence, was always on the side of law and order; and here, as elsewhere, was a potent force in favour of constitutional reform as against violent revolution.

Turning to other parts of the country, we find abundant evidence in the same direction. It was in rural England that the great work of Primitive Methodism was done. When machine breaking, incendiarism and violence were rampant, when secret drilling and open riot were prevalent, it came as a healing and regenerative force, creating innumerable centres of sweetness and light. If it inculcated principles of freedom and independence, it laid equal emphasis on obedience to the law, everywhere discouraging violent remedies for the removal of grievances. While in no sense a political Church, it prepared men for the intelligent discussion of political questions, and gave them the instincts which must constitute the foundation of a wise and stable Democracy. The brutish ignorance, the loose morality, and the generally vicious habits of the great bulk of the peasantry may be learned from a thousand testimonies. The agricultural labourer was a serf, and revealed the degradation

which serfdom invariably produces. Rural England was no Arcady of innocence in those days. Canon Jessopp, than whom no better authority could be cited, tells us that in the nine years ending in 1808 there were committed to the four prisons at Wymondham, Aylsham, Walsingham, and Norwich Castle, 2,336 men and women. Whatever the sins of the city of eighty and a hundred years ago, they were eclipsed by the deeper darkness of the country town and village life of that period. The desperate condition of many rural districts may be gathered from the fact that as late as the early thirties, in one parish of East Anglia seventeen farms were burnt down by incendiaries in a single winter.

This was the condition of things when the Primitive Methodist missionaries began their work in rural England. The change they effected was often speedy and dramatic. Whether they had to deal with "Captain Swing" burning down farmsteads in East Anglia, or "Ned Ludd" breaking machinery further north, they went into the very midst of the seething mass of disaffection which threatened England with a bloody revolution, and without pay or recognition did more for the cause of law and order than all the parish constables and magistrates put together. Instead of flaming farmsteads, reducing honest men to ruin, and filling the minds of people with horror and fear, the nights were made vocal with the sounds of praise and prayer. "It cost me two shillings a night all

through the winter to have my house watched," said a grateful farmer to Robert Key, "and then we went to bed full of anxiety lest we should be burnt out before morning. But you came here and sung and prayed about the streets—for you can never get these 'varmints' into a church or chapel. But your people brought the red-hot Gospel to bear upon them in the street, and it laid hold of their guilty hearts, and now these people are good members of your church."

This was the beginning, and a very remarkable one, but it was only the beginning of the work these men accomplished. They raised up local preachers and class leaders, and with extraordinary sagacity elaborated an organisation which in innumerable centres has trained men for the leadership of their fellows, and has developed those principles which have made it possible for the nation to attain that ordered progress which has been the glory of the last half century, in which

> Freedom has broadened slowly down
> From precedent to precedent.

To quote the eloquent words of Canon Jessopp, which might profitably be taken to heart by intolerant Anglicans, who, if they could, would gladly stamp out Dissent from the parishes of England: "They have kept up a school of music, literature, and politics, self-supporting and unaided by dole or subsidy—above all, a school of eloquence,

in which the lowliest has become familiarised with the ordinary rules of debate, and has been trained to express himself with directness, vigour, and fluency. What the Society of Jesus was among the more cultured classes in the sixteenth century, what the Friars were to the masses of the towns during the thirteenth, that the Primitive Methodists are in a fair way of becoming among the labouring classes in East Anglia in our own time."

Special mention has been made of the miners of the North and the labourers of East Anglia, but the same thing was done, more or less, all over the country. It was not for nothing that the bulk of the famous seven men of Preston who inaugurated the Temperance movement were Primitive Methodists. While at the outset the Denomination largely shared the popular estimate of the time in regard to the moderate use of intoxicants, its leaders early recognised the necessity and value of the new movement. Hence the remark of Hugh Bourne, that it was not he that had joined the Teetotalers, but the Teetotalers who had joined him. Hence, too, the hearty co-operation of the Denomination with the movement when other churches held aloof or vehemently denounced it. Its chapels were at the service of the Temperance cause when no other buildings were obtainable for holding meetings, and in various parts of the country it furnished leaders and pioneers of the movement. Its Conferences year after year affirmed

the principles on this question which are now accepted by all the Free Churches, and throughout the land it did much to leaven the religious sentiment of the nation when the movement was hated and despised. Alongside this church all the other churches have now ranged themselves, and are fighting the battle of Temperance reform.

Primitive Methodism has rendered immense service of a social and political kind, though it may not have been always prominent as a political force, still less, and indeed not at all, as a political organisation. As has been shown, it has done much to prepare the masses of the people for taking their share in the government of the nation; and its sympathy with the poor and oppressed has ensured its stand on behalf of righteousness and justice from the infancy of the Trade Union movement to the days of Passive Resistance. As is well known, the first Nonconformist to suffer the distraint of his goods as a protest against the Balfourian Education Act was a Primitive Methodist, while all over the country this Church has taken a leading part in the work of Passive Resistance, and has furnished the largest number of imprisonments for refusal to pay the rate. In that great Federation of the Free Churches which has done so much to save the country from Sacerdotalism, Primitive Methodism has been everywhere a potent factor, and in many places the backbone of the movement.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Romance of Ecclesiastical Statesmanship	289
Hugh Bourne Our First Statesman	289
Statesmen of a Later Time	289
Development of District Types	290
The Romance of the District Meeting	290
The Development of a Connexional Spirit	291
The Change in the Conference	291
Our Work in the Colonies	291
Robert Ward's Work in New Zealand	292
Early Movements Towards African Mission	293
Opening of Mission in Fernando Po	294
Aliwal North Mission Opened	295
Missions on West Coast of Africa	296
Central African Mission	297
Our Work in London	299
Joseph Odell's Work in Birmingham	300
Our Sunday School Work	300
Great Advance in Church Property	301
The Church Extension Fund	301
Advance in Ministerial Education	301
The Distinguished Services of Sir William P. Hartley	302
The Romance of the Book Room	303
The Splendid Services of the Chapel Aid Association	304
The Work of the Insurance Company	304
Colleges for Higher Education	305
The History of Our Church	306
Use of the Word Romance Justified	306

CHAPTER XVII.

OF ITS MODERN PROGRESS.

ROMANCE and ecclesiastical statesmanship may not at first sight seem to be much akin, and yet it it is impossible to think of the part played by the men who shaped the polity and policy of Primitive Methodism without a thrill of romantic feeling. Hugh Bourne might not seem to the men of his day a romantic figure, and yet, as we think of him tramping his way over the hills of Staffordshire, Cheshire, and the adjacent counties, stern of face yet of tender, kindly heart, intent sometimes on the right shaping of the constitution of the new Church he was unconsciously founding, but always animated with a passionate desire to induce men to flee from the wrath to come, a halo of romance gathers round him. The first statesman of the movement, Hugh Bourne has had many able successors. Thomas King, Thomas Bateman, the Garners, the Antliffs, Moses Lupton, Colin Campbell McKechnie, Joseph Wood, John Atkinson, James Travis, Sir William Hartley, William Beckworth, Thomas Lawrence, John Hallam, Thomas Mitchell, Robert Hind, have all in turn and in one degree or another possessed the

large view, the wide outlook, the glance before and after, the gift of rule, the note of authority which always mark the ecclesiastical statesman. With a different environment some of them would have been bishops or cabinet ministers; and most of them have left a deep impress on the Constitution and regulations of the Church as set forth in the Consolidated Minutes.

In 1842 we emerge from the glorious if confused work of the general campaign which laid the foundations of the new Church all over the land, and enter the period when the results of the early evangelism were carved into great Districts, each within certain limits autonomous, and developing in course of time its own distinctive life and leaders. The Northern type differed widely from that of the South, and the East Anglian could readily be distinguished from the product of every other District.

Around nothing, perhaps, distinctive of this period does more romance gather than the District Meeting. In its size, its intensely individual spirit, its almost absolute power over the destinies of the travelling preachers in the matter of stationing, it reflects curiously the life of the time. The whole of the ministers within its jurisdiction were stationed by this meeting, and Homeric conflicts were often waged, and dramatic scenes and kaleidoscopic changes were frequently witnessed, before the location of the preachers for the next year was

finally decided. With the introduction of the invitation system, and the breaking down of the barriers, all this is changed, and if the Connexion has lost something of the individuality of its separate parts, it has gained enormously in the unity of its corporate life. The passing of the District system has been followed by the development of that Connexional spirit essential to a Church.

Similarly the Conference has changed from a very small and exclusive assembly, whose proceedings were rigidly secluded from the public gaze, to a large and more highly representative body, open to the public, and attracting visitors from all parts of the country. Its presiding officer, instead of being a mere chairman for the day, has become the President of the Conference, the representative of his Church in the eyes of the world for the next year, during which he will be expected to visit all parts of the country.

A purely home missionary agency at the beginning, Primitive Methodism followed its emigrant members to Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States, but not till 1870 did it undertake distinctively Foreign Missionary work. The Colonial churches, with the exception of those in New Zealand and the United States, have become merged in the unions of the Methodist churches, but only in the former Colony are they now directly affiliated with the British Conference. The story of our Colonial Missions is full of interest. In following the wander-

ing colonists to gold diggings and remote stations, the missionaries endured great hardships, and travelled distances far exceeding those of the pioneers at home. John Sharpe, for example, travelled 1,200 miles to attend his District Meeting. Among the Australian missionaries, the names of John Sharpe, Robert Hartley, Michael Clark, Joseph Warner, E. C. Pritchard,—now a vigorous old man who has long been resident in this country, a J.P. and a member of the Deed Poll—should be mentioned.

Associated with Primitive Methodism in the United States are the names of William Towler, Joseph Odell and W. H. Yarrow ; while in Canada, N. Watkins, John Davidson, Thomas Guttery and William Rowe played a leading part. At the time of Methodist union in Canada we had 99 ministers and over 8,000 members.

The pioneer work of Robert Ward in New Zealand is full of the romance of beginnings. He landed at New Plymouth in 1844, and began a work which in its devotion, its enthusiasm, its heroic endurance and success in the face of enormous difficulties, can never be adequately told. In all this his wife nobly shared. She was, indeed, as good a missionary as her husband. So great had been the longing for the work, that she had often wished she had been a man ; and when the letter of invitation arrived, she danced for very joy. It was pioneer work indeed in which these two heroic souls engaged,

for the first batch of settlers had only arrived three years before. From the opening of his mission on that first Sunday in September, 1844, when he conducted an open air service and preached from the text: "It is a faithful saying," &c, through all the years that followed, Robert Ward toiled heroically. Not content with ministering to his countrymen, he mastered the Maori tongue, and became, in truth, our first Foreign Missionary. We have glimpses of him enforcing the New Birth amid the most picturesque conditions, the stars gleaming through the foliage of the trees, the fire lighting up the swarthy countenances of his hearers, darkness wrapping the little company round on every side. Once the missionary made a journey of one hundred miles, in the course of which he crossed swamps, climbed mountains, crept along narrow and precipitous ledges, made his way over rock-strewn beaches, and once slept, with his Maori guide, on the sand. In New Zealand we have to-day 39 ministers, 2,969 members, and Church property worth £69,922.

Not less thrilling and romantic is the story of our African missions. Norwich District, notably the Yarmouth Circuit, must ever claim an honourable share in this work. As early as 1837 Joseph Diboll, a delegate from Yarmouth, offered his services as a missionary to Africa at the Sheffield Conference of that year, but timid counsels prevailed, and nothing was done. At Swaffham, in 1852, the

ordinary missionary meeting was turned into what may be termed our first Foreign missionary meeting. As the claims of Africa, with its seventy millions of people, were considered, the Holy Ghost fell upon the meeting, £40 5s. was subscribed on the spot, and three brethren offered themselves for Africa. But the condition of the Missionary Fund led the Conference to defer the opening of the mission. In 1860 the Conference definitely committed itself to an African mission, but it was not till 1870 that the work was actually begun.

A marvellous record, no doubt, but one of which we cannot be proud. At last, however, on January 22nd, 1870, nine years and a half after the Jubilee Conference had definitely committed itself to an African mission, two Primitive Methodist missionaries landed on the island of Fernando Po, off the West coast of Africa. Why here, and not at Port Natal, the spot on which the eye of the Jubilee Conference was fixed? Because while there was an open door, suitable men were not found to enter it. In the case of Fernando Po, both were forthcoming: Captain William Robinson and James Hands visited the island in the "Elgiva," and found an opening for the Gospel. They sang and prayed and preached and won the hearts of the people. The call was clear, and the Connexion and Richard W. Burnett and Henry Roe heard and obeyed. Immense difficulties have had to be encountered. A deadly climate, a hostile Government—for the island

belongs to Catholic Spain, and our work has been interrupted again and again—the drink trade, which here, as in so many parts of Africa, works fearful havoc, to say nothing of the influences which have to be fought wherever African heathenism and licentiousness have to be encountered, all have tested the courage of the Connexion and the devotion of the missionaries. Few African races are less accessible to Missionary influences than the Bubes, and yet, in spite of all these enormous difficulties, splendid work has been done. There are 236 members on the island and four separate stations. The Industrial work has been especially successful, both in its influence upon the natives and in the financial help it has rendered our exchequer.

Yet again, in that same year, 1870, the call came from Aliwal North, in the Orange Free State. Ere the close of the year, Henry Buckenham landed at Port Elizabeth, and in due course began his work at Aliwal. The wonderful progress of that work, and its extension among the natives until the circuit became the largest and most prosperous in Primitive Methodism, would furnish a whole chapter of marvels. It is a story full of the mingled romance and daring and difficulty and triumph so characteristic of missions. The names of John Smith, Henry Buckenham, John Watson, and George E. Butt call up a wonderful record of courage, initiative, intrepidity and devotion, while the Training School furnishes largely the key which

unlocked for us the door of extraordinary development and material progress. If the Boer War served for the time to paralyse our work, it revealed its genuine character and the loyalty and devotion of our converts, while a membership of 1,820, with Church property worth over £20,000, show that our thirty years' toil and sacrifice have not been in vain.

From the first it was intended that from Fernando Po the work should be extended to the mainland, and in 1894 J. Marcus Brown was appointed to open up the work in Southern Nigeria. Since then, in Jamestown, Urua Eye and Oron, all in British territory, our devoted missionaries have toiled with abandon and success. The Oron Training Institute was built by the Christian Endeavourers of the Connexion at a cost of £1,000, for the equipment of native teachers, and is to be maintained by the same organisation. The opening of a Girls' Training Institute soon became a necessity, and one has already been established at Jamestown. The London Women's Missionary Society has taken a special interest in this work, and they have rendered really remarkable financial help to our Missionary work for some years. The fact that we have on the West Coast over two hundred members and considerable Church property, shows that in the comparatively short time we have been at work there considerable success has been attained. The official visit, paid to our West African Missions in 1906, by the Rev. James Pickett and Alderman

F. C. Linfield, furnished very valuable information as to the position and prospects of the various stations, and was a means of renewed enthusiasm to our people.

In 1889 an absolutely pioneer Mission was undertaken, when a mission party was equipped and sent to South Central Africa. This was a very serious undertaking, and demanded a courage, a self-sacrifice, and enthusiasm worthy of the best days of Primitive Methodism. To reach the scene of operations involved an overland journey of 2,000 miles to a country which no white man had ever penetrated. Mr. F. C. Selous, the famous hunter, had attempted the task, but had to beat a hasty retreat, and narrowly escaped with his life and the loss of twelve of his attendants and all his possessions. The pioneer party consisted of the Rev. Henry and Mrs. Buckenham, the Rev. Arthur Baldwin and Mr. F. Ward. The story of their long journey by ox-wagons is naturally invested with much of the romance of the pioneer missionary, but the hardship and suffering often involved dispelled much of the glamour of romance to the mission party themselves. The route lay through Vryburg and Mafeking, since made famous by the Boer War, along the Limpopo River, through King Khama's country, and across the great Kalahari Desert to the Zambesi, which was sighted after nearly six months' travelling.

Lewanika, the king of the country, though

favourable to the mission when it was first projected, had in the interval become prejudiced against it by the slanders of a wicked trader, and refused to allow the party to proceed to its destination. He required the missionaries to visit his capital, Lialui, involving a journey of six hundred miles through a country more difficult than any hitherto traversed. After more than twelve months' bitter experience of the king's anger, they were allowed to proceed to Mashukulumbweland, as it was then supposed to be called. The journey thither lay through vast tropical forests, and a way frequently had to be cut for the wagon. When a wheel went smash, a new one had to be made from wood obtained in the forest. This would probably occupy ten days. At last, on December 21st, 1893, after a journey of four years and eight months, the long trek came to an end. Among a savage and barbarous people the work has necessarily been slow. At Nanzela, Nkala, Nambala and Sajobas, —subsequently transferred to Mudodolis—where Walter Hogg toiled heroically and died, it has been foundation work ; but gradually, under the influence of the missionaries, the whole aspect of the people has changed. Schools have been established, converts won, and the Rev. E. W. Smith has reduced the language to writing, compiled a grammar and lexicon, translated portions of the New Testament, and thus laid the foundations of a great work in coming years.

Although the problem of British heathenism has not been entirely forgotten, it cannot be said that we have yet fairly faced it. Much has been done in rural districts, but the great cities, to which the population has so largely drifted, have not hitherto been allowed to lay their burden upon the hearts of our people in any adequate measure. Every decade, for example, London adds to its population a town of 300,000 souls. It may be questioned whether Primitive Methodism is doing its share towards coping with their needs. At the same time the story of our work in London has been full of romance, from the days when William Watson and Paul Sugden were sent forth by the Leeds circuit, in 1832, to mission the modern Babylon, which then had a population of only a million and a half, and found themselves on arriving possessed of a shilling between them, which they gave as a "tip" to the driver of the coach. Between that adventurous landing and the holding of the London Conference of 1908, in City Road Chapel, intervene seventy-six years of incredible toil and travail. In spite of the enormous difficulties amid which our work has been carried on in this world-city, the membership has increased during the last thirty years by over two hundred per cent., and the census of the "Daily News" shows that whereas all other Churches had had a decrease in attendance at public worship, Primitive Methodism had an increase of twenty per cent. The work carried on in

Whitechapel by Thomas Jackson, and at St. George's Hall by Joseph Johnson, among the most degraded of the population, is worthy of the best traditions of Primitive Methodism. The story of the former is one long romance, and that of the latter is not less so, whether under James Flanagan or its present superintendent.

In this connection, mention must be made of the splendid aggressive work done by the Rev. Joseph Odell in Birmingham, not only in connection with the Home for the training of Evangelists, which he conducted for several years on his own responsibility, though under the sanction of Conference, but in the erection of a large and commodious Hall and Sunday School Rooms, valued at £10,000, almost free of debt, and without assistance from any Connexional Fund. For these and other services Mr. Odell received the special thanks of the Conference.

A fascinating story might be told of the re-organisation of the Sunday School work in connection with the Connexional Sunday School Union by Dr. Joseph Wood and his various successors in the Secretariat. The number of scholars has increased during the last thirty years by over 100,000. Within this period has been witnessed the development of the movement of Christian Endeavour, and it is satisfactory to note that with its 3,520 societies and 117,225 members, Primitive Methodism occupies a foremost place among the churches in this great movement.

The increase in the number of Church Members since 1878 has been under 30,000, a much smaller advance than has been chronicled during any similar period of the Connexion's history, but in all other respects the progress made has been extraordinary. The value of the chapel property has considerably more than doubled, having increased from a little over two millions sterling to close upon five millions. But these figures only very partially indicate the progress made, for whereas the debt thirty years ago stood at £825,858, or not far short of one-third of the total value, it is now little over one million, or, roughly, one-fifth of the whole. The whole aspect of our chapel affairs has been transformed in the last thirty years. Large and beautiful structures have been erected in hundreds of instances, in good situations, taking the place of old and unsightly ones in back streets. The launching of the Church Extension Fund, with the Rev. Thomas Mitchell as Secretary, has been of immense service in regard to the occupation of new ground. By advancing money free of interest, or what is the same thing, paying the interest of a loan for a period of from three to ten or fifteen years, the loan being repayable in annual instalments, a great many causes have been started, and handsome properties erected which otherwise would have been quite impossible. The fact that it is now assisting 180 cases, the cost of which reaches £300,000, and that of this amount

nearly one-half the cost has been raised, speaks for itself.

But in nothing has such wonderful advancement been made as in the provision for the education of the rising ministry. Here, as in the inauguration of the Chapel Aid Association and the Church Extension Fund, Sir William P. Hartley has laid the Church under an incalculable debt. To him is entirely due the appointment of Dr. A. S. Peake as tutor of the College, and step by step he has led the way towards the more thorough equipment of the ministry. Twice at his own cost he has enlarged the College, until it is now the largest and most completely equipped institution of the kind in the country, capable of accommodating over one hundred students, and rendering practicable a three years' course of training. These enlargements were carried out under his personal supervision, and the beauty of the work and the perfection of the buildings must be attributed, in no small measure, to his skill and care. He is the central figure in the progress of the last quarter of a century. Alike in the liquidation of a Missionary debt of £5,000 in 1885, the launching of the Chapel Aid Association, the inauguration of the Jubilee of the Missionary Society in 1893, as well as the raising of a Jubilee Fund of £50,000, the endowment of a Hartley Lectureship, the idea of which, however, was due to Dr. Joseph Ferguson, the enlargements of the College, afterwards called the Hartley Primitive

Methodist College, the provision for additional tutorships, and the inauguration of the Centenary Fund of £250,000 he has been the leader and inspirer of his Church. His statesmanlike insight and foresight, his princely generosity, the influence of his example in regard to the duty of systematic and proportionate giving, his wise and liberal gifts of valuable books to the ministers and local preachers for the enrichment of their libraries at a cost of thousands of pounds, to say nothing of the help he has rendered to the Local Preachers' Aid Fund, and to innumerable cases all over the country, render him the greatest benefactor his Church has ever known.

Although Sir William Hartley has in many things exceeded all his brethren, many other names might be mentioned as specially associated with particular sections of the country : Thomas Robinson and George Green, so vitally connected with the wonderful progress of Scottish Primitive Methodism during the last twenty years ; L. L. Morse, M.P., at Swindon, and Henry Adams at Sheffield ; but space forbids further indulgence in this interesting theme. The sons and daughters of Primitive Methodism have given themselves to the promotion of her interests with an abandon and devotion beyond all praise.

Then there is the romance of the Book Room, from the days when Hugh Bourne launched the first magazine in 1819, with the primitive beginnings

of a Book establishment at Bemersley, to the present premises in Aldersgate Street, London, to be superseded this year by the spacious new premises at the Holborn Hall, with their annual turnover of £37,000, an aggregate circulation of its seven magazines of 927,772 a year, its yearly total issue of publications of nearly three and three-quarter millions and its profits of £4,800, render it in proportion to our membership by far the largest and most prosperous establishment of the kind in the country. The evolution of its handsomely got-up magazines from the humble beginnings of ninety years ago is a fascinating story, and a succession of Editors and Book Stewards have loyally devoted themselves to its interests.

Mention has been made of the Chapel Aid Association. The story of this, and its associated institution, the Insurance Company, is full of the romance of far reaching service and astonishing development. Founded in 1866 for the purpose of insuring the various chapel properties of the Connexion against fire, the Insurance Company has gradually built up a business with a gross premium revenue of £3,394, a reserve fund of £35,851, while out of its profits it has made grants to distressed chapels of £26,294. With this remarkable work its present chairman, Mr. John Coward, J.P., has been closely associated for many years.

Still more wonderful is the development of the Chapel Aid Association, Limited, which borrows

money at 3½ per cent., and lends it to trustees at 3¾ per cent., with a provision that a certain proportion of the debt shall be repaid yearly. Founded in 1889, it should be recorded that all the details were worked out by Sir William Hartley ten years before, and to his confidence in its soundness and value, as evidenced by his investing in it large sums from time to time, must, more than to any other person, be traced its singular success. In the initial stages of the institution the first Secretary, the Rev. John Atkinson, rendered valuable service, and his able successor, the late Rev. Robert Hind, conducted its affairs with a financial genius, which won the warmest admiration of all who were associated with him. Its total deposit account is about half a million sterling a year, and through its agency trustees of Connexional property have reduced their liabilities by £354,420. When the small margin of profit of a quarter per cent. on which it conducts its business is considered, the fact that its annual profits amount to £1,000 is astonishing.

From this bare outline of modern progress, mention must not be omitted of the provision made for two special classes of the young. Elmfield College, York, has rendered splendid service for the education of the sons of our well-to-do families, and associated with it will ever be the memory of the sainted John Petty, its first governor; while Bourne College, Birmingham, has rendered almost

equally distinguished service, and here will be remembered the long and faithful work of its only Governor, the Rev. George Middleton. But, perhaps, no institution for the young has more powerfully appealed to the chivalrous instincts of our people than the Orphanage at Alresford, and none can think of its history without recalling the names of Joseph Peck, William E. Crombie and John Hewitson; while the younger institution of the same kind at Harrogate is indebted for its first homes to the generosity of Sir William Hartley.

The inexorable limitations of space have compelled the omission of innumerable details and the neglect of large spaces in the romantic story of Primitive Methodism. To have included everything would have necessitated the writing of a new History of this Church, and one very much larger than the great work of the Rev. H. B. Kendall, B.A. But the story that has been told, however imperfectly, will serve to indicate that in connection with the people called Primitive Methodists, the old saying has been abundantly verified, that fact is stranger than fiction. At every stage of their history the hand of Providence has been seen in the most wonderful manner, and in tens of thousands of instances it has been demonstrated that the age of miracles is not past. If memory and imagination serve, to those who love her, to cast over the story much of the glamour of romance, it is a romance associated with the purest motives, the loftiest aims and the

grandest achievements : a romance concerned with the rescue of countless thousands of perishing men and women, the regeneration of multitudes of lives, the transformation of innumerable homes, once unworthy of the name, into abodes of peace and happiness, light and love, and that has set in operation forces that will continue to bless the world to the end of time.

If in our review of a century of Primitive Methodism we have contemplated men and women whose marvellous achievements were due in part to the influence of a sublime purpose which stirred their blood, and a vision which promised for them and for others the highest fulfilment of life, then the word romance is a correct description of it all. And if as all this passes before the mind of the Primitive Methodists of to-day, they also find their blood is stirred ; if a beckoning finger invites them to similar conquests, and the fair vision of a regenerated world for a moment gleams before their imagination, then romance is once more the true word to designate the emotion that thrills, and the purpose that inspires them ; a romance that may surely compare with anything known to the knights of old : for its inspiration is the Cross of Calvary, and its final consummation the complete establishment of the Kingdom of God.

INDEX.

Adams Henry . . 303
African Mission decided 294
Agricultural Labourer 283
Aliwal North . . 295
Alston . . . 156
Ansdale Jane . . 145
Antliffs The . . 250
Antliff Dr. William . 251
Antliff Dr. Samuel . 252
Antliff Dr. J. Cooper 254
Atchinson R. . . 280
Atkinson John . . 305
Bayley Matthias . 22
Batty Thomas . . 116
Batty in Weardale . 116
Bateman Thomas . 179
Baldwin Arthur . 297
Bastow J. A. . . 198
Beckworth William . 187
Bellham W. G. . 167
Benton John . . 109
Birchenough, John . 16
Birks Mary . . 149
Bishop Edward . 171
Bourne Hugh . . 11
,, light from books . 15
,, conversion . . 15
,, and the Quakers . 16
,, first Love Feast . 17
,, at Dales Green . 19
,, and Mow Cop . 11
,, and D. Shubotham 21
Bourne Hugh,
,, becomes Class Leader 28
,, first Sermon . 27
,, at Congleton . 33
,, and Sanctification 33
,, and W. Clowes . 47
,, visits J. Crawfoot 53
,, and Short Prayer Meetings . . 56
,, and Lorenzo Dow 58
,, firm for Camp Meetings . . 76
,, expelled . . 78
,, at Wootton . . 80
,, journeys on Foot 100
,, and C. C. McKechnie 82
,, studies Greek . 83
,, employs J. Crawfoot . . . 53
,, in London . . 94
,, at Lichfield . . 100
,, his Personal Appearance 100
,, proposes Marriage 101
,, place as a Founder 101
,, visits Canada . 102
,, first Editor . . 101
,, and the Teetotalers 286
,, a Romantic Figure 289
,, statesmen Successors 289
,, shoes . . . 100

Bourne James . . 104
„ first Book Steward 105
„ and Jubilee . . 106
Bourne College . . 305
Borrow George . . 273
Braithwaite, William 122
Brown Jane . . 142
Brown J. Marcus . 296
Boden J. . . . 91
Book Room . . 303
Bowran John G. . 261
Buck Miss . . . 150
Buckenham Henry . 297
Bultitude Elizabeth 151
Bunn J. . . . 266
Burt Thomas . . 278
Burnett R. W. . . 294
Butt George E. . 295
Camp Meeting, First . 62
„ first Decided . 60
„ second . . . 68
„ of Note . . 70
Charlton George . 184
Chesterton G.K. . 99
Chambers J. . . 170
Champness Thomas . 143
Chapel Property . 230
Chapels Odd . . 231
Chapel Aid Association 304
Chartists . . . 271
Christian Endeavour. 300
Church Extension . 301
Circuit Organisation . 205
Circuit Minute Books 216
Class Tickets . . 95
Clemitson Robert . 100
Clowes William . 34
„ parentage of . 35
„ early Convictions of 35
„ apprenticeship of 36
„ personality of . 37
„ at Leek . . 38
„ pays his debts . 45
„ marriage of . . 39
„ at Warrington . 41
Clowes William
„ terrible Experiences of 41
„ and Press Gang . 42
„ at a Love Feast . 43
„ conversion of . 44
„ and J. Steele's Class . . . 45
„ early Christian Work of 49
„ begins to Preach 51
„ trial Sermon of . 52
„ avoids Camp Meetings 84
„ resumes Camp Meetings 86
„ expelled . . 86
„ becomes Travelling Preacher . . 90
„ place as a Founder 102
„ his Persecutions . 102
„ pioneer Work . 103
„ personal Appearance 103
„ cottage in Hull . 214
Conference and Temperance 286
ConversationPreaching 23
Cotton Thomas . 60
Coultas Robert. . 143
Coward John . . 304
Crawfoot James . 52
Crombie W. E. . . 306
Cromwell . . . 245
Crossley Mary . . 148
Daily News Census . 299
Davidson J. . . 292
Davies Richard . . 127
Diboll J. & Missions 293
Dinnick W. . . 260
District System . . 290
Dodsworth Jeremiah. 243
Driffield and Salaries 209
Dow L., Early Career of 56
Dunnell Mrs. . . 88

Eckersell William . 202
Education Act . . 287
Eliot George . . 134
Elliott Elizabeth . 164
Elmfield College . 305
Evangelism, Distinctive Mode of . . 106
Faringdon Russells . 166
Ferguson Dr. Joseph. 302
Fernando Po . . 294
Fletcher Mrs. . . 134
Flesher John . . 234
Flanagan James . 300
Founders Created a Type . . . 106
Garners, The Three . 246
Garner Jno., Sketch of 246
Garner Jno., Nearly Killed . . . 167
Garner William . . 248
Garner Jas. . . 249
Gilmore Hugh . . 194
,, early Years of . 199
,, love of Books . 194
,, in Australia . . 199
Gilbert Jeremiah . 172
Gladstone . . . 198
Golden Hill Potters . 30
Guttery Thomas . 243
Guttery Arthur T. . 243
Green J. R. . . 264
Green George . . 303
Grey Sir George . 199
Hands James . . 294
Hallam Mrs. Christopher 153
Hallam Christopher . 153
Hallam John . 153, 289
Hallam J. and North Shields . . 214
Harland William . 243
Harrisea Head Chapel 30
Hartley Sir W. P. . 259
,, and the College . 302
,, and Missionary Debt 302
Hartley Sir W. P., ,, and Chapel Aid Association . 305
,, and Jubilee Fund 302
,, and Hartley Lecture 302
,, L.P. Aid Fund . 303
,, and Centenary Fund 303
,, And Proportionate Giving . . 303
,, and Gifts of Books 303
Hartley Robert . . 259
Hebbron Henry . 241
Hepburn T. . . 280
Hewitson J. . . 306
Hind Robert . . 305
Higginson Henry . 270
Hirst Mrs. Ann . . 155
Hockley Chapel . . 221
The Hodges . . 257
Hull Circuit . . 113
Hungry Forties . . 209
Hymn Book, Small . 270
Incendiarism . . 284
Increase since 1878 . 301
Increase in Chapel Property . . 301
Industrial Work in Africa . . . 295
Institute Girls' . . 296
Insurance Company . 304
Invitation System . 291
Jackson Thomas . 300
Jamestown . . . 296
Jefferson W. . . 271
Jessopp Canon . . 285
Johnson Elizabeth . 145
Johnson Jos. . . 300
Johnson Dr. Paul 66, 70
Jones William . . 243
Jukes Richard . . 127
Jubilee Conference . 106
Kendall Family, The. 254
Kendall Thos. . . 141
Kendall Chas. . . 255

Kendall H. B. . . 256
Keightley Family . 124
Key, Robert
,, as a Preacher . 239
,, and Old Farmer . 285
,, finds Bread . . 165
,, at Hadleigh . . 126
Kidsgrove . . 20, 26
King Thomas . . 120
Kirkland Sarah . . 134
Labour Conditions . 276
Lialui 298
Langham R. . . 214
Lawrence Thomas . 188
Lewanika . . . 297
Lexham Hall . . 170
Lion of Judah . . 271
Lister William . . 163
Lockwood William . 166
Ludd Ned . . . 284
Lupton Moses . . 289
Machine Breaking . 283
Mashukulumbweland 298
Mattishall . . . 125
McKechnie
Colin Campbell 201
McDougall James . 155
Magazines . . . 304
Middleton George . 306
Miners Imprisoned . 282
Missile Throwing . 166
Missions Colonial . 291
Missionary Society,
London Women's 296
Mission Central
African 297
Mitchell Thomas . 301
Morris Dinah . . 134
Morrigill Hugh . . 199
Morgan George . . 209
Morse L. L. . . 303
And Swindon .
Mow Cop . . . 10
Described . . 61
Nambala . . . 298
Name, P. Methodist,
Adopted 97
Nanzela . . . 298
Norton Camp Meeting 69
Norton C. M., and
Wesleyans 75
Newell Thomas . . 243
Nicholson George . 143
Nkala 298
Nixon James . . 90
O'Connor Feargus . 271
Odell Joseph . . 292
,, work in Birmingham . . . 300
Oratory Early Days . 233
Oron Mission . . 296
Oron Institute . . 296
Orphanage Alresford. 306
Orphanage Harrogate 306
Oxtoby Johnnie . 114
Palmerston Lord . 226
Parrott Miss . . 141
Passive resistance . 287
Patterson Arthur H. 177
Peake Dr. A. S. . 203
Persecution & Hunger 163
Petty John . 127, 196
Pickett James . . 260
Pickett H. J. . . 260
Pickett Frederick . 260
Pitt 233
Pointon Joseph . . 27
Porteous Mrs. . 138, 209
Prayer Meetings at J.
Hall's . . . 23
Preachers' Early . 233
,, Originality 238
Preachers' Equipment 191
Preachers' Occupations 191
Preachers Local . 176
Preachers' Homes . 210
Preachers' Houses . 212
Preston . . . 286
P. Methodism no secession . . 94

P. M. Connexion Formed 93
Pritchard E. C. . . 292
Proctor T. . . . 163
Race George, Sen. . 182
Retribution Strange . 224
Robinson Crusoe . 221
Ride and Bishop 129, 171
Robinson Capt. Wm. 294
Robinson Thomas and Scotland . . 303
Romance & Adventure 175
Roe Henry . . . 294
Rowe William . . 292
Russell Thomas . . 129
Ride John . . . 127
,, Regulations 211
Salaries . . . 209
Sanderson William . 237
Seaton Delaval . . 281
Selous F. C. . . 297
Shubotham Daniel 21, 56
Sharpe John . . 292
Smith Elizabeth. . 146
Smith Atkinson . . 255
Smith John. . . 295
Smith Edwin W. . 298
Spoor Joseph . . 118
,, and Footpad . 164
,, at Ripon . . 119
,, and Persecution . 264
Spittle Sarah . . 157
Stansfield George . 171
Steele James Expelled 90
Stevenson R. L. and Romance . . 161
Stobbs Stephenson . 187
Sunday School Union 300
Sunday School Increase 300
Swaffham . . . 293
Swing Captain . . 284
Tatton Green . . 222
Taylor Ann . . 158
Taylor James . . 184
Tea Party with One Spoon . . . 217
Temperance Reformation 277
Towler W. . . . 292
Trades Unionism . 277
Travis James . 243, 289
Tunstall First Chapel 219
Ward Robert . . 292
Wallace George . . 167
Waller Thomas . . 172
Watkinson Five Brothers 260
Warner George . . 127
Warner Joseph . . 292
Watkins N. . . 292
Watson Dr. John . 295
Wedgwood John . 107
Weardale . . . 116
Wigton . . . 140
Wilkinson Willie . 226
Wood Dr. Joseph . 300
Woodcock Henry . 215
Woodnorth Thomas . 90
Yarmouth . . . 293
Yarrow . . . 292
Zambesi . . . 297

FLETCHER AND SON, LTD., PRINTERS, NORWICH.

Nazarene Theological College
B37038